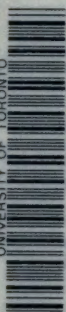



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BEHIND THE VEIL IN PERSIA

ENGLISH DOCUMENTS



AMSTERDAM 1917
C. L. VAN LANGENHUYSEN

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Introduction.

The systematic strangling of Greece by a group of powers who allege to be guided in their actions by the desire "to protect small nations", and who seek by means of this catch-word to enlist the moral support of their own people and that of other countries, is being achieved by methods which have been found effective by the Entente powers in their long joint practice of oppression.

The fate that England and Russia have mapped out for Persia since 1907 affords a striking example of such methods.

All that is now being experienced by Greece and more, Persia had to go through. Not only from Russia, whose breaches of law and contracts in its dealings with that unhappy country have few parallels in recent history. Infinitely more grave is the attitude of England who, beneath the mask of the "friendly mediator and protector of the weak", as in the case of Greece, cautiously confers the role of executioner on an allied nation to save the remnant of her own prestige.

The double game played by England for nearly a decade has long deceived many an intelligent and patriotic Persian, and gave reason to hope that the well-meaning English mediation so often appealed to in times of great stress would save Persia from incessant humiliation. In England itself and not least from the group of English members of the "Persia Committee" criticism of British policy in Persia made the leading statesmen in Downing Street very uncomfortable. Professor Edward G. Browne, the most eloquent advocate of the cause of Persia in England, has again and again entered the lists for a more chivalrous policy towards Persia in his famous book "Persian Revolution" and in his numerous other works. Indeed he often addressed hard and bitter words to England and Russia, whereby he touched and soothed many a wounded Persian heart. Grey, however, who was responsible for the English zig-zag course in Persia, could afford to let this severe critic have his say. By allowing

these apostles of a higher level of British humanity to appeal, in the full glare of publicity, to the British sense of justice, like any Hyde Park orator, a safety valve was provided for public indignation, which, by the way, never went beyond the limits of good breeding, and thus absolution was obtained for troubled consciences. In order to put the whole responsibility for the dismemberment of Persia on Russia, and to represent their own conduct as a case of "dira necessitas", the whole correspondence relating to Persian affairs between ministers and the diplomatic agents since December 1906 was published in Blue Books of quite unusual dimensions. The history of Young Persia is described in these volumes almost without a gap. A government which had so little to fear from the light of publicity as to directly invite investigation of its acts blunted the arrows of its most persistent aggressors.

At first sight such means of defence appear most effective and successful, but upon closer investigation, none are deceived as to the unparalleled guilt of England regarding the tragic and unmerited fate of Persia save the ignorant, the casual and prejudiced portion of the general public. For the letters and telegrams of these very Blue Books, although intended as pleadings for the defence, are, if read with care, inculcating material and documentary evidence of breach of agreements, such as a nation has hardly ever confessed to more openly or, shall we say, more shamelessly. The United States of America, lately so ready to watch for every alleged offence against the rights of nations, raised no word of protest at the time.

Nor is this the whole of the incriminating material. As the contents of the Blue Books approach the times of the greatest breach of agreements, during those years when Persia saw herself a prey to a real policy of strangling from two sides, the remark preceding the telegrams: "*conveys the substance of the following despatch*" becomes more frequent. The impression thus created as if much were suppressed, is intensified by the fact that reference is made in these telegrams and despatches of English diplomatists to documents which, although dated, are looked for in vain under these dates in the Blue Books. The most striking, though by no means the only example of

this, is the often quoted note which Sir Cecil Spring Rice handed to the Persian Government four days after the signing of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907.

To show from their own facts with what unscrupulousness the English Government has trampled on the most fundamental rights of an Oriental people awakening to a remarkable sense of responsibility, even depriving them of rights which this Government had procured for Persia when it appeared opportune, is the purpose of this publication. It is founded, as has been remarked, on the documents published by the English Government, but not only on these.

For the most recent period the documents found in the British Consulate at Shiraz are adduced as evidence, documents, the greater part of which marked or designed as "confidential" would hardly have found their way into the English Blue Books.

The temporary arrest of the British Consul at Shiraz by Persian gendarmes in November 1915 (on which occasion his documents fell into German hands), was commented on by the English and their press with vociferous indignation. Lord Grey called Major O'Connor's arrest by Persian gendarmes an unprovoked act of robbery. As usual, he passed over in silence the misdeeds which the English themselves had committed against Consular officials and subjects of the Central Powers before the arrest of their Consul. In the beginning of March 1915, the Imperial German Consul Wassmuss barely escaped a plot instigated by the English when setting out for Shiraz to take up his duties, on which occasion his companion Dr. Lenders was made a prisoner by the English. About the same time the Imperial Consul in Bushire, Dr. Listemann, and the local manager of the firm of Wönckhaus, Herr Eisenhut, with his wife, were arrested in the most brutal manner during the night, by English officers and Consular officials, and taken together with Dr. Lenders by way of Basra to India where Herr Listemann, Herr Eisenhut and Herr Lenders are interned in the Civilians' Camp of Ahmednagar.

The Russians, in order not to be behind their allies, did not hesitate to arrest the Turkish Consul at Resht and carry him off to Russia.

I.

The death of Muzaffar Eddin left Persia in a deplorable but not quite hopeless state.

To a certain extent, Nasir-Eddin had been successful in maintaining the balance of power amongst the various nations all more or less jealous of each other's privileges. He had played them off cleverly one against the other, in order to further the interests of Persia, but his son, Muzaffar-Eddin, who was a weakling and became a tool in the hands of the reactionary circles, was not so skilful.

His own and his ministers' incessant need of funds caused him to accept loans on terms which greatly endangered the independent development of Persia. Gradually he allowed the reins of government to slacken and drop into the hands of Russia and England and their diplomatic agents in Persia.

The costly experience gained by Nasir-Eddin over a loan might well have served as a warning to Muzaffar-Eddin, as it proved very clearly that the Persian people at the close of the 19th century had already awakened to a clear comprehension of political factors and that the constitutional movement was far better prepared than paid writers (like D. Fraser) wished the European public to believe.

In 1890 Shah Nasir-Eddin had sold the monopoly of the entire tobacco trade in Persia to a British Company in consideration of a quarter of the anticipated yearly profits estimated at about £ 500,000. Upon this the Persian Priests issued a decree which caused all tobacconists in Persia to close their shops and the people to give up smoking, so that in a very short time the tobacco trade was absolutely paralyzed.

In consequence of this, the Shah found himself constrained to cancel the monopoly, which could only be made possible by the payment of an indemnity to the British Company of £ 500,000 which was raised on a 6 % loan and this—the only Persian loan—was left as a disastrous inheritance by Nasir-Eddin to his son.

When Muzaffar-Eddin died, after ten and a half years of mismanagement, he had added to it a long list of new financial obligations which were a heavy burden on the state. Over £ 3,500,000 had been obtained in the shape of Russian and Anglo-Indian loans, without furthering national prosperity in the least.

A survey of the Persian National Debt in 1906, which at the same time shows the rigorous conditions on which the loans were granted, gives the following picture:

Persia's loans at the death of Muzaffar-Eddin Shah	
1891	Government Nasir-Eddin Shah:
	Indemnity for Tobacco monopoly £ 500,000
1900	Government Muzaffar-Eddin Shah:
	First Russian loan (5 %) for 75 years
	not redeemable within 10 years,
	issued at 85 Rbl. 22½ millions
	£ 2,200,000
Terms:	
1.	All Persian debts to be paid to foreigners.
2.	An engagement to arrange loans exclusively with Russia.
3.	All customs revenues, except those from the Persian Gulf
	to be paid to the Banque du Prêts which, after retaining
	the interest due, pays half-yearly the remainder, if
	any, to the Persian Government.
1902	Second (Russian) loan on the same
	terms as above Rbl. 10 millions
	£ 1,075,000
1904	Third (English) loan by the Imperial
	Bank of Persia from the Indian Go-
	vernment with the sanction of Russia £ 190,000
1905	Fourth (English) loan, from the same
	source £ 100,000

Guarantees:

1. Revenues derived from fisheries (about 60,000 Tomans yearly) yielded by the fishing rights on the Caspian shores and the rivers flowing into them, granted some 30 years before to the Russian Liazanoff.
2. In the case of these not yielding enough, (in fact they did) the revenues from all the Persian telegraphs to be given as further security.
3. In the case of these not proving sufficient, the customs revenues from the Persian Gulf were to be pledged.

(Owing to clauses 2 and 3, Persia lost the free disposal of revenues from the Persian telegraphs and the Persian Gulf customs.)

The last-named loans were subsequently amalgamated with the later ones of 1911.

A debt of £ 4,000,000 might have appeared insignificant for a country like Persia in view of the possibilities offered to a skilful financial reformer by the undeveloped wealth of the soil and the primitive system of taxation which was capable of great expansion, but it pressed sorely on the country and the condition wrung from Persia that she must not enter upon a fresh loan without Russia's consent for 10 or 75 years (in the case of the nonpayment of the 1900 loan) proved a great calamity.

In spite of all these drawbacks, a new era dawned for Persia even before the death of Muzaffar-Eddin. Tired of bartering away their rights to Russia and England, the people in July 1906, by means of that passive resistance, which is a favourite and most effective weapon of defence with Orientals, had obtained a constitution and a Parliament which was opened on August 19th. In Europe where information on the matter was principally provided through Anglo-Russian channels, this Parliament was much derided, because its history was not known and the driving forces were hidden which for so long a time frustrated all positive parliamentary work. Europe showed scant patience towards this Oriental people who apparently had emerged in one night from an autocratic into a constitutional state of government. This treatment was very unlike that meted out to the Duma.

It is a fact that already in the first month of the session the Persian representatives of the people declined to vote the proposed Anglo-Russian loan of £ 400,000, a paltry sum which would speedily have found its way into the pockets of the courtiers.

In 1907 Mohammed Ali succeeded Muzaffar-Eddin. He was known as a Russophile and an enemy of the Constitution and feared and hated by his people as the despotic ruler of the Azerbaijan province. The Parliament, which Europe derided and which the Shah affected to ignore, gave evidence of itself soon after his accession, by a patriotic resolve. It forced the Shah to dismiss the Belgian Naus, who, like the other Belgians in the service of Persia, had provoked the greatest indignation of the Persians by administrative measures which were contrary to all Persian interests. To this Belgian Naus¹⁾ may be traced the conclusion of the two Russian loans which shook the foundations of Persian independence. He is the author of that unfortunate customs tariff, conceived solely in Russian interests, the absurdly low rates of which lost Persia one of her most important sources of income²⁾.

On August 31, 1907, England and Russia signed the well-known treaty which divided Persia into two spheres of interest and a neutral zone. It was a treaty in the conclusion of which the most largely interested party, the sovereign state of Persia, was never consulted. On the day of the publication of the

¹⁾ Even David Fraser, the correspondent of the Times who showed such a prejudice against Persia, condemns Naus (Persia in Revolt, p. 31) and his activity: "He well deserved his fate". His fate, by the way, is bearable. When Naus had radically mismanaged Persian finances, he was able to purchase from his "takings" in Persia magnificent châteaux and property in Belgium (v. Shuster "Strangling of Persia", p. 63).

²⁾ Morgan Shuster (Strangling of Persia, p. 271) calls the Naus tariff "the most conspicuously unsuccessful tariff of the world" from the Persian point of view. Shuster gives figures: The import and export duties brought in 1909/10 only 4½ %. Russia who participated with 50% in the entire import and export of Persia only had to pay 3% on its chief article of importation: sugar, and on refined petrol only ½ % duty. Besides, Russia forbade all transit traffic destined for Persia which was non-Russian. This exclusion of the non-Russian goods, non-Russian merchants sought to circumvent, by sending merchandise by parcels post which according to international rules had to pass through Russia unopened.

treaty, Atabeg-i-Azam — the exiled Prime Minister (an uncompromising reactionary) — called back by the Shah against the will of the people, was assassinated. The indignation of the Persians at the dividing up of their country was so great that Sir Cecil Spring Rice, the English Minister at Teheran, had to hand the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs a note of conciliation, the text of which is suppressed in the English Blue Books, but which nevertheless was later on authenticated in the British House of Commons¹). Some leading sentences of this classical document are herewith reproduced:—

“Neither of the two Powers seeks anything from Persia, so that Persia can concentrate all her energies on the settlement of her internal affairs This agreement is injurious neither to the interests of Persia nor to those of any other foreign nation, since it binds only England and Russia not to embark on any course of action in Persia calculated to injure the interests of the other and so in the future to deliver Persia from those demands *which in the past have proved so injurious to the progress of her political aspirations* Henceforth Persia, aided and assisted by these two powerful neighbouring States can employ all her powers in internal reforms The object of the two Powers is not in any way to attack, but rather to assure for ever the independence of Persia Their object was not to allow one another to *intervene on the pretext of safeguarding their interests* . . . Persia will thus be perfectly free to manage her own affairs in her own way.”

It will soon be shown how Russia and England kept to these promises, especially as regards non-intervention in the internal affairs of the country under the pretext of protecting their own interests.

The parliamentary government, which Shah Mohammed-Ali had recognised on oath proved a thorn in his side. He summarily arrested the Prime Minister Nasr-ul-Mulk on December 15, 1907. Neither this proceeding nor a rising incited by doubtful elements against Parliament led to the desired result: volun-

¹) Given by Browne, Persian Revolution, in the Teheran paper, *Habl-ul-Matin*, (Sept. 14th 1907) and by Shuster, *Strangling of Persia*, P. 28. See also appendix (P. 162).

teers in large numbers guarded the building and the deputies. Half a year later however, on June 2nd, 1908, the first flagrant breach took place of the promise given by Sir Cecil Spring Rice not to intervene in Persia's internal affairs. The Russian Minister von Hartwig, well known by his intrigues in Belgrade at the outbreak of the world-war, and Marling, the English chargé d'affaires, threatened the Persian Government with forcible measures if the resistance against the Shah's wishes did not cease, by which of course was meant the surrender of the last Persian rights as guarantees for Anglo-Russian loans.

Backed up by this terrorisation of Cabinet and Parliament the Shah, having previously retired to a safe retreat outside the capital, induced various dignitaries to follow him and having kept them prisoners he proceeded to the well known coup d'état of the 23rd of June 1908.

By his orders the parliamentary building was shelled by a brigade of Cossacks under the command of Colonel Liakhoff and the occupants were partly killed, partly taken prisoner or put to flight.

The consequence was open revolt, especially in Northern Persia. Tabriz, its chief seat, was unsuccessfully besieged for nearly a year. Something unexpected happened in this year of revolution; the Shah's own General Sipahdar-i-Azam¹⁾ joined the nationalists and the warlike tribe of the Bakhtiari did likewise. Teheran was occupied by the Bakhtiari; Liakhoff and the Persian Cossack brigade under his orders left the Shah in the lurch and surrendered. The whole of Persia rose like one man against the Shah. He saw that he had lost the game and abdicated on July 16th, 1909, in favour of his son, Ahmed.

The opportunity for intervention was however too favourable for Russia not to seize it in spite of given promises. Although such a frantic detractor of all things Persian (and Oriental in general) as David Fraser, had to confess that the Nationalists had behaved in an exemplary manner towards Europeans²⁾ and to agree against his will, after

¹⁾ Who later on went over again to the reactionaries.

²⁾ Persia and Turkey in Revolt (p. 131). "Both M. Sabline (the Russian chargé d'affaires) and Sir George Barclay (the English Minister) were satisfied, that foreigners had nothing to fear."

traducing the Bakhtiariis thoroughly¹⁾ that they, like the other nationalists „kept excellent order and observed the usages of civilisation scrupulously”; Russia declared the interests of its subjects as threatened and sent to Tabriz, Resht, Kazvin and other places in Northern Persia thousands of troops considerable numbers of which were never withdrawn. When the tribe of the Shasevans threatened Ardebil, time was not granted to the Persian punitive expedition, for which the impoverished country had raised £ 25,000 to restore order which even the Times (Nov. 7, 1909) regretted. Just as if Ardebil were a Russian town, 3200 Russian troops were sent there again for the protection of the Russian inhabitants²⁾. The climax of this breach of treaty was reached when the leader of the united tribes of the Shasevans and Karadaghis, Rahim Khan, was allowed to escape across the frontier when hard pressed by the Persian troops.

The request of the Persian government to deliver into their hands, according to the treaty of Turkmanchai³⁾ this bandit against whom Russia after all had despatched troops, was ignored by Russia⁴⁾. After these expensive internal disturbances, which were only rendered worse by the incessant massing of Russian troops, the new Cabinet and the newly elected members of parliament were faced by the heavy task of financing the budget. It is true that the simplest roads to an amelioration of Persian finances had been blocked by England in 1908

¹⁾ They are (he says p. 88. and 89) entirely without education constitution brings loot to the tribesmen and fat appointments to their chiefs His ambition was satisfied by sitting quietly in Isfahan ... and milk the people. Almost in the same breath on the following page, he contradicts himself by saying “for these highland cateroms to have kept their hands off the fat burgesses of Isfahan was truly a triumph of self denial.”

²⁾ None of whom suffered the slightest injury, as the English Blue Book, Persia Nr. 1 (1910) Nr. 263 expressly states.

³⁾ The peace of Turkmanchai put an end to the Russo-Persian Campaign of 1828. According to this treaty Persian rebels who had crossed the frontier into Russia had to be extradited.

⁴⁾ English Blue Books. Persia No. 1 (1911) Sir A. Nicholson, English Ambassador at St. Petersburg telegraphs to Grey: “The Russian Government will naturally refuse to comply with this request”.—It would be more natural for compacts to be adhered to. See also: Shuster (Strangling of Persia, p. 44).

when the then minister of finance, Sani-ed-Dowleh, who had been educated in Europe, presented his budget in Parliament independently of the financial adviser Bizot, a Frenchman, whom Shuster has sufficiently characterised¹⁾. Sani-ed-Dowleh pleaded at the time for a tax on town-property and for an increase of the import duties on tea and sugar, the proceeds of which he wished to see devoted to the re-establishment of public order, the making of roads and educational purposes. Against such "a prejudice to their own interests" the diplomatic agent of England, Marling²⁾, strongly protested. He reported with naive indignation and surprise to Grey, that the Persian minister of finance was not considering a foreign loan (against adequate concessions of course) but in the first instance an increase of revenue, which might serve as guarantee for loans later on!

The possibility of opening up new sources of revenue being destroyed and the collecting of the taxes itself requiring a strict organization which in its turn could only be maintained by a regular payment of the salaries of officials, there remained at last only the unpleasant resource of a new loan. Relations were entered into with France and Germany; a private London Bank was negotiated with; the pawning of the crown jewels was taken into consideration; every means seemed justifiable to save Persia from a new Anglo-Russian loan with its extortionate terms. But England and Russia prepared an untimely end for these negotiations by their note, which was presented to the Persian Government on April 7th 1910. This note with its elastic paragraphs allowed England and Russia to put their veto against every foreign loan which implied concessions, on the ground of political or strategical interests³⁾. On May 20th Russia and England—not Russia alone, as Browne would have

¹⁾ Shuster, *Strangling of Persia*, p. 66.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1909) No. 113. Marling's report to Grey is one of the most striking instances that England endeavoured to prevent every attempt at financial reform by bringing forward the vainest objections and reasons even before Shuster's ingenious attempt at reorganisation. Marling's report on his brutal treatment of the Persian minister to whose ideas Shuster reverted, concludes with the contemptuous phrase: "It is unnecessary to give a detailed account of Sani-ed-Dowleh's Budget."

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1911) No. 87 with enclosure.

it — extorted from Persia the agreement that no railway concessions must be granted¹⁾.

It cannot therefore be a matter of surprise that indignant Persia declined the new Anglo-Russian loan²⁾ and tried to meet the ever increasing financial needs of the country by the flotation of an internal loan of £ 1,000,000. Behind this refusal stood the increasing indignation of the whole country with the patronizing attitude of the two neighbouring empires, which was in opposition to all international law and usage. It need not be said that the driving power of this national movement were the supporters of the most prominent and capable members of parliament, men whom the report of the English minister [Nov. 1909³⁾] attested to be men of integrity who should become a useful force for reform if led properly by capable party leaders. But as they as patriots would not agree to anti-Persian politics, Marling, the English *chargé d'affaires* makes this unbending parliamentary party responsible for the wrecking of the Anglo-Russian plans, identical in *his* opinion with Persian welfare. He cables to London in comical anger on July 24th, 1910 "they have sacrificed the interests of the country to their unjustified mistrust of the motives of the two Governments⁴⁾",

The necessarily negative policy of Parliament would naturally increase the chaos which an empty exchequer produces anywhere. Russian interference (the characteristic case of Darab Mirza⁵⁾ — 1910 — may just be mentioned) seemed practically to authorize unruly tribes (which had from time immemorial threatened the security of Persian caravan-routes), to increase their means of existence at the expense of the weak government by extensive raiding expeditions.

Month after month the lamentable spectacle is repeated: the Persian Government to whom England denies the means

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1911) No. 81 further No. 91 and No. 106 where it is confirmed that Russia and England must be consulted before other powers are granted concessions!

²⁾ Grey (English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1911) No. 107 calls these extortionate terms "very moderate".

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1910) No. 269.

⁴⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1911) No. 133.

⁵⁾ See Shuster, *Strangling of Persia*, p. 45.

of maintaining order, and in fact whose slender receipts they curtail by claims for compensation, must submit with angelic patience to the constantly repeated Anglo-Russian admonitions and threats concerning a restoration of order. Marling, the English chargé d'affaires, never tires of cabling reports to London on the general insecurity in the towns and the deplorable state of the high roads.

These complaints are at last condensed on Oct. 16th, 1910, into the well known ultimatum of England that "unless by three months from now order has been restored to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government" on the Southern commercial high roads, England would take this task in hand with troops of 1000 to 1200 men under the command of British-Indian officers. The expense entailed by these troops would have to be met by an increase of 10 % on the import-duties of the Southern ports and from the revenues of the province of Fars¹⁾. In plain words: England demands merely for *her* commerce in Persia the formation, equipment and maintenance of a police troop under British command and that from the revenues of the sovereign state of Persia!—

England did not deny that this ultimatum provoked sheer indignation not only in Persia but also in Constantinople, where meetings of protest of Persians and Turks were held and that it estranged even such Englishmen who endeavour desperately and vainly to maintain the legend of English justice²⁾. The reply of the Persian minister for Foreign Affairs Hussein Kuli Khan Nawwab³⁾ to the English ultimatum was an exposé of the Anglo-Russian debit account, clothed in

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1911) No. 194 and enclosure.

²⁾ The English minister (Barclay) writes to Grey on Nov. 20th 1910.) "The suggestions which have been made in a portion of the European press as to the recent note being the forerunner of the partition of Persia by Great Britain and Russia have not fallen unheeded in this country (Persia). The articles have been translated and published in full, while the comments thereon have in some cases been even more exaggerated than those which appeared in the European papers." (English Blue Books, Persia No. 1 [1911] No. 270

³⁾ Now minister in Berlin.

diplomatic language, but clear enough to anyone who knows how to read between the lines¹).

While refuting the presumption that England could on its own initiative increase by 10% the import duties of the sovereign State of Persia and designating this measure, which in itself could only be welcome to Persia, as being within the power of its government alone, he opposes to the English complaints about commercial losses the fact that in spite of the general "insecurity" the import into Persia in the preceding year had gone up 10%!

England at last carried through its demands, even if in a modified shape, jointly with Russia and of course in return for new loans being made for which security was offered by pledging in the first place the entire customs revenue and secondly the receipts from the telegraphs and the mint. In these loans the payment of the pension to the ex-Shah — the maintenance of the Cossack-Brigade (which since the beginning of the constitutional movement had been used by Russia for its suppression) the payment and arming of the troops, especially the creation of a gendarmerie occupied a large space. Italy had declined to furnish instructors, but from Sweden a consent had been received. On August 15th, 1911, Hjalmarson, the general instructor of the Persian Gendarmerie together with two comrades arrived in Teheran; other Swedish officers soon followed him. Thus the foundation was laid of that Persian Gendarmerie whose acts aroused so much attention in the world war — a body which had been created through the pressure of England for the security of Persian trade routes of commerce under the command of Swedish officers in the pay of Persia.

The year 1911 becomes one of the most remarkable in the more recent history of Persia through the arrival of the American Morgan Shuster whose services as Treasurer General had been acquired by the mediation of the American Government and by resolution of Parliament and who replaced the Frenchman Bizot²).

¹) English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1911) No. 199 and enclosure.

²) Shuster (Strangling of Persia, p. 66) characterises Bizot's activity with American outspokenness: "Bizot bequeathed to the patient and trusting Persian government a type-written report of 30 pages, edited in beautiful French and expressing Bizot's opinion as to *what somebody should do* to reorganize Persia's fiscal system."

Shuster's arrival took place at a very lively period. A murderous attempt had been committed against the Governor of Isfahan and his nephew in which the former had been gravely and the latter mortally wounded. Asylum had been given to the murderers, who were Russian subjects, by the Russian Consul General; their extradition was refused to the Persian authorities. Five days later the Persian minister of finance, Sani-ed-Dowleh, "*persona ingratissima*" with the Russian as well as with the English legation¹), was shot by two men who while being arrested, also wounded four Persian policemen. These murderers also stated themselves to be Russian subjects and the Russian legation enforced their extradition by Persia and got them across the frontier. By these by no means isolated murders, which were in a way sanctioned by Russia in protecting their authors, every endeavour of the Persian Government to enforce order and respect for the law which were constantly demanded under threats by England, was completely frustrated and the unrest in the country became constantly greater. The state of general insecurity reached its culminating point when the Ex-shah returned. The Shah who had been living in exile in Odessa had landed on the Persian coast, under a false name and a disguise, as it was said, with arms and ammunition which were declared as "mineral water" and at once started in cooperation with his brother who was operating further west, on his brief and unfortunate campaign against the troops of the Persian general Yeprim Khan. On September 7th, 1911, he fled, repeatedly defeated, on board a Russian Steamer across the Caspian lake to Russia.

In this attempt of Mohammed Ali to recover the Crown of Persia, Russia and England played a remarkable part. Both these powers had signed jointly with Persia the deed in which the abdication and pension of the Shah were laid down. He was to forfeit this pension by any proved attempt to cause

¹) See Browne: *the Press and Poetry of modern Persia*, p. 322, April 20. 1910, Marling, Englands chargé d'affaires writes to Grey on May 22. 1908 when there was a prospect of Sani-ed-Dowleh becoming Prime Minister: "It seems difficult to conceive a more unfortunate choice" (English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1909) No. 121).

unrest in Persia. The Russian Government had further expressly promised to take "efficient steps" to suppress every political agitation on the part of the Ex-shah against Persia.

On July 18th, 1911, Grey cabled to Sir G. Buchanan at St. Petersburg "we both recognised the new Shah. I do not see how we or Russia can acquiesce in return of Ex-shah. You should ask Russian Government whether they will notify Ex-shah that under no circumstances can his return be allowed"¹).

On July 28th the captain and mate of the Russian Steamer "Christophoros" are dismissed from their posts because they had communicated to the Press particulars of the passage of the Ex-shah across the Caspian lake to Persia²).

On July 29th the Persian Government puts a price on the head of the Ex-shah of 100,000 Tomans and 25,000 Tomans each for the seizure of his brothers Shua-es-Sultaneh and Salar-ed-Dowleh.

On July 31st the English and Russian ministers hand a note to the Persian government stating: as the Shah has returned to Persia the British Government recognize that the Shah has forfeited his right to the pension in the struggle . . . they will take no part whatever³).

In February and March 1912 England and Russia force Persia to pay to the Shah whose Turkoman and Caucasian bands (again for the most part Russian subjects) plunder the Persian province of Mazanderan and have destroyed much property, a pension of 75,000 Tomans a year. Indeed they have the effrontery to demand that Persia do not only grant an amnesty to the Russo-Persian robber bands but reward them with 70,000 Tomans for the troubles caused by them⁴). And this thieves' money is extorted by a new Anglo-Russian loan on which Persia is to pay interest at the rate of 8%!

The activity of Shuster, which preceded these sad Anglo-Russian breaches of trust had lasted eight months only. It began as full of promise as perhaps that of no other statesman in recent times. With undisguised surprise which soon in-

¹) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 191.

²) Browne, Persian Press and Poetry, p. 330, July 28th 1911.

³) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 246.

⁴) English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 238.

creased to admiration and enthusiasm, those Persians who had their country's welfare at heart, saw that Shuster—unlike in this to the Belgians and Frenchmen Naus, Mornard, Bizot and others—looked upon himself as a servant of the Persian state, that he tried to justify the confidence placed in him by America and Persia by not contenting himself with pocketing his salary but that he actually began to work for it and to reorganize.

The spectacle of a subject of the European-American nations subordinating his own or Russo-English interests to those of Persia was unheard of in this shamefully exploited country! With tense expectation and undisguised joy Parliament followed all his actions which were prompted by an upright sense of duty and an unusual measure of energy and clear insight, combined with a brilliant gift of organization. It conferred on the 13th June 1911 unanimously on this new Treasurer General the highest controlling power over all in and outgoing funds. For the first time Persia had put its fate—for it depended and still depends on its economical conditions—of its own free will into the hands of a Non-Persian.

As Shuster had unlimited powers he forced the Belgian Mornard, the Director General of customs, to subordinate himself to him in spite of the protests of the Belgian Government. He obtained that the pay for the so-called "Central Army" which hitherto had passed through the hands of high functionaries, was paid out by himself direct. The consequence was a considerable saving. He financed the troops which were sent against the Ex-shah and his seditious brothers and caused a previously ordered consignment of arms and munitions which had just arrived to be seized and with it the troops mentioned were equipped.

It is to his energetic measures that Persia owes the quelling of the sedition planned by the Shah and his Turkomans and Caucasians. As a statesman who provides for the future he stored corn in Government magazines in view of the unfavourable harvest in order to prevent hunger-revolts (a measure copied by Mornard later on) and to be prepared for a just distribution to the poor. For part of the direct taxes is paid in natural produce in Persia and this produce had

hitherto been generally cornered by reactionary grandees and had become a source of yearly enrichment.

The confidence reposed in him by young Persia was limitless and limitless also (but unfortunately only too fallacious) were the hopes which Persia's patriots founded on the career of this meteor. The English minister (Sir G. Barclay) wrote on July 11th, 1911, to Grey: "Mr. Morgan Shuster has now been two months in Teheran and his influence is already a leading factor in the situation."

His chief care was to get out of Persia, with the help of his plenipotentiary powers, for its welfare all that hitherto had been neglected. A more even distribution and a more careful collection of taxes appeared urgent. In order to carry it through he created a treasury gendarmerie which was stationed at different points in the country and had to carry out a just but rigorous collection of taxes, if necessary by force of arms. Enormously wealthy Persian grandees, such as Ala-ed-Dowleh, the Sipahdar, Farman-Farma, etc., men with enormous ground property had so far got out of paying any taxes at all. One must read the comical episode in Shuster's book¹⁾ in which he describes, how the multi-millionaire Farman-Farma, Russia's dearest friend, adjures the state council with tears to remit him the taxes demanded by the Treasurer-General. Shuster remained inexorable.

Thus it came to pass that for the first time for many years the diplomatic representatives of Persia received their salaries regularly from the public exchequer which was empty on Shuster's arrival but which now slowly filled.

The opposition Shuster met with would quickly have discouraged any weaker man. The request addressed by him to England to let him have Major Stokes, the military attaché at the court of Teheran, as chief of the treasury-gendarmerie led to that gentleman being allowed to leave the Anglo-Indian service. When Russia protested against his entering Persian service, England also withdrew her consent and forbade him to accept the office although the appointment had already been

¹⁾ Strangling of Persia, p. 259.

approved of by parliament¹⁾. Again the assurance of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice given in September 1907 that neither Russia nor England would be allowed to intervene under pretext of safeguarding their interests, was put on one side.

Russia had made as much capital as possible out of the disturbances which the Ex-shah with his band of followers and prince Salar-el-Dowleh had caused in the threatened districts of Persia and had committed breaches of faith on these occasions, which England's elastic policy parried by joining in the perpetration of these actions. For Russia it was the North, especially Tabriz, for England the South, especially Fars and the gulf coast which became the scene of arbitrary acts which mocked the sovereignty of Persia.

On July 27th, 1911, the Russian Consul at Tabriz with the help of hundreds of troops liberated Rashid-ul-Mulk who had been arrested by the authorities for high treason and took him under Russian protection²⁾.

In the province of Gilan the Persian governor was informed by the Russian Consul that he "would arrest and imprison any suspected person whom he considered to be a Russian subject, wherever he may be and in whatever costume he may be." On the day of the Anglo-Russian declaration of neutrality the Persian government received the information that the Russian Vice-consul had informed the authorities and inhabitants of Ardebil of the approach of the Ex-shah and praised his means of fighting and pecuniary resources. He urged them: "not to do various acts as the result will be detrimental to them."³⁾

On September 10th the Russian Consul General warned the authorities and inhabitants of Tabriz, in view of the robber chief Shuja-ed-Dowleh who was a Pro-Russian

¹⁾ Even the Times of Aug. 4. 1911 says: "neither the British nor the Indian Government has any power to prevent Captain Stokes accepting the appointment."

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 251.

³⁾ Ibidem: The Persian minister of foreign affairs who forwarded this information to Grey with the request to make representations to Russia says rightly: "In view of the neutrality which the Russian Government profess to maintain, one does not know how to explain these acts."

and had openly gone over to the Ex-shah, threatening the town, "not to construct barricades or fight within the walls. If they wished to fight they must do so outside the town"¹⁾.

When the defeated Ex-shah fled to the Caspian Sea (ready to land at any centres of fresh disorder as Grey cabled to Sir G. Buchanan on September 14th)²⁾ the Persian Government repeatedly pointed out to England and Russia that the sheltering of the Shah on Russian soil would constitute a violation of the protocol of 1909, article 10, signed by Persia, England and Russia and also of the recent declaration of neutrality.³⁾ M. Nératof replied to this that the Ex-Shah would be kept under surveillance, but it was not possible for the Russian government to give a guarantee that his recent attempt would never be renewed!⁴⁾

England, who booked to her moral credit all Persian appeals for mediation, but refrained from giving practical assistance, now took advantage of the straits Persia was in owing to the military situation, to turn to account to the fullest possible extent the struggle between the rival chieftains in the South which had always existed. In the first place the English consular troops in the South were re-enforced. On October 24th, 1911, the Persian Government was informed by England that 400 troops of cavalry were on their way to Persia to protect English interests. The moving requests of the Persian Government that it might itself be allowed to restore order and that the work of the gendarmerie under Swedish orders, which had been so urgently desired by England, should not be forestalled were in vain⁵⁾. The English measures gave an opportunity for Russia to increase by 250 men its consular troops in Isfahan and Resht⁶⁾.

The mask was dropped on October 18th, 1911, when Nératof declared to the English chargé d'affaires in St. Petersburg,

1) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 332.

2) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 343.

3) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 340 and 350.

4) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 361.

5) English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 29 and 37.

6) English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 67.

O'Beirne¹) that according to his view the Russian government could not hold back any longer with measures of extreme rigour which would be equivalent to "an occupation of Persian territory".

The reasons which Nératof gave for this resolve had no justification whatsoever, they could not have been clear even to the English diplomatist. They became apparent however in the course of the conversation²). It was Morgan Shuster's too successful activity which went counter to Russian interests. "He (Nératof) complained strongly of that gentleman's attempt to obtain a control over the whole Persian administration such as was quite incompatible with Russian interests." And the classic words fell: "The Persian reforms must be proceeded with gradually and in such a manner as to take Russian interests into account."

Shuster was actually almost on the point of carrying order into the Persian chaos. Far-reaching but well thought-out plans of reform had been prepared by his energetic hand. Neither Russia nor England, who in her blind hatred of Germany had declared herself in agreement with every step of Russian policy in Persia, could do with Persia reverting to secure conditions, a Persia perhaps with its own railways, its own mines, with a justly distributed taxation, with incorruptible ministers and a gendarmerie serving pre-eminently Persian interests. Nothing could deter Shuster and his ever encreasing body of helpers from their planned out work—neither the disturbance caused by the Ex-shah and the princes in the north, nor the raids of their half Russian Shahsevens and Turkomans, whose payment by the injured Persian Government Russia and England took steps to assure nor the interference with the people by Anglo-Russian contingents of troops nor playing off Kawam-ul-Mulk, the head of the Khamseh-tribes against the governor of Fars and his follower Soulet-ed-Dowleh, the chief of the Kashgai-tribe, nor constantly repeated demands for indemnification for looting raids which in a sense were the answer of nomadic tribes to Anglo-Russian presumption. There is no blemish on this work, behind which parliament stood in serried ranks.

¹) went down on the "Hampshire" with Lord Kitchener.

²) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 45.

As constant pin pricks were of no avail, recourse was taken to open brutality. Sir Edward Grey gave the signal: "Persia's independence" he cables to St. Petersburg at the end of October 1911¹⁾ when Morgan Shuster was negotiating with the Banking House of Seligmann Bros. in London for a loan of £4,000,000 "cannot be allowed to be marked by unfriendliness either to Great Britain or to Russia and it is obvious that in view of the geographical situation no Government which refused to respect interests of Russia could be tolerated by the latter at Teheran. This we shall certainly impress on Shuster when the occasion arises." By this act England had given Russia full power against Shuster.

The first opportunity which presented itself was eagerly seized. Europe was still occupied with the after effects of the Morocco crisis and there was little fear that indignation over ill-treated Persia would be of more than a few days' duration.

On the orders of the State Council the Treasurer General had, with the help of his gendarmes, proceeded to the confiscation of the property of Prince Shua-es-Sultaneh who had forfeited it by his open revolt against the Persian Government.

The day after the confiscation Pokhitanoff, the Russian consul general²⁾, drove away Shuster's gendarmes by Cossacks, pretending that the prince's Castle was mortgaged by the Russian Banque d'Escompte³⁾. Shuster's gendarmes took possession anew of the castle on the following day. There was no blood shed, but insults were rife from the Russian side; the two Russian Vice-consuls distinguished themselves specially in this. They did not succeed however in drawing Shuster's gendarmes, who maintained a correct attitude throughout⁴⁾.

Shortly afterwards, after the Times⁵⁾ had just stated that the Russian minister had "corrected" and that the Persian Government had protested against the action of Consul General Pokhitanoff, Russia demands a solemn apology from the Persian Government to whom every inquiry into the case

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 65.

²⁾ The day he assumed office the deserving minister of foreign affairs Hussein Kuli Khan Nawwab resigned his post.

³⁾ This assertion is proved false by Shuster (Strangling of Persia p. 153).

⁴⁾ See Shuster (Strangling) p. 145 and on.

⁵⁾ 9. and 10. Oct. 1911.

is refused¹⁾. The English minister again accepts the request of the Persians for mediation, but seconds the Russian demand²⁾. On the evasive reply of Persia follows the first Russian ultimatum on November 10th.

Consequent upon the gathering of Russian troops on the Persian frontier in which England is interested solely in view of a threatening occupation of Persia by the rival, Grey telegraphs on November 16th, 1911, to Sir G. Buchanan: "If the Russian Government thought that no satisfactory settlement could be reached without the dismissal of Shuster I could urge no objection. I did not wish to suggest the dismissal of Mr. Shuster but I mentioned it lest there should be an impression in St. Petersburg that I was prepossessed in his favour."³⁾

The proposal to demand Shuster's dismissal and thus to wreck the work of reorganization constructed under such difficulties does not therefore emanate from Russia, as England would have it believed, but from Sir Edward Grey himself according to all the evidence⁴⁾.

Events now follow each other precipitately. Russia breaks off diplomatic relations with Persia. 4000 Russians stand already in Kazvin and new contingents are on the march. On November 17th, 1911, Grey confirms once more that Shuster's dismissal has the consent of England⁵⁾.

On November 24th occurs a memorable spectacle in Teheran, such as the world had never witnessed before; on the assurance of the English minister that Russia's troops would not advance further if a sufficient apology were tendered, the representative of Persia apologizes to the Russian minister for a wrong *committed by Russia*. The latter declares diplomatic relations to be resumed but announces at the same time a second ultimatum⁶⁾

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 76.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 81.

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 122. See also No. 65.

⁴⁾ The "Times" had already violently attacked Shuster on Oct. 18.

⁵⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 127. You can therefore make it quite clear to M. Nératof that any demand on Russia's part for Shuster's dismissal will be met with no objection by His Majesty's Government.

⁶⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 4 (1912) No. 163: Shuster describes this for England the "protector of small nations" humiliating act with bitter and eloquent words (Strangling of Persia, p. 163 and on).

It is presented on November 29th, 1911, and expires 48 hours later. It contains the following chief demands:

1. Dismissal of Shuster.
2. Persia is prohibited from taking Non-Persians into its service without Anglo-Russian consent.
3. Money indemnity for the ordering of Russian troops

Shuster's description of the reception which these humiliating demands met with in parliament deserves to be saved from oblivion:

"A few minutes before noon the public vote was taken. As each name was called the deputy rose in his place and gave his vote; there was no secret ballot here. And when the roll call was ended every man, priest or layman, youth or octogenarian had cast his own die of fate and had staked the safety of himself and family and hurled back into the teeth of the Great Bear from the North the unanimous answer of a desperate and down trodden people who preferred a future of unknown terror to the voluntary sacrifice of their national dignity and of their recently earned right to work out their own salvation¹⁾."

The sombre December days which Persia lived through after this manly refusal of grave violations of right, shall not be depicted here in detail. It is sufficient to state that Russia occupied Resht, Enzeli and Tabriz and that in this largest city of the North the Russian usurpers executed every nationalist they could get hold of, that shooting, hanging, torturing, binding and blowing men from the cannon's mouth, brutal massacres of women and children were the order of the day according to the account given by the "Novoie Vremia" on this occasion: "True humanity requires cruelty." Professor Browne whose gorge rose at the indifference of his government, published a pamphlet on the Tabriz atrocities²⁾ in which quite a series of these Russian deeds of heroism were illustrated. Even the English consul had to admit that some of the persons executed had suffered innocently³⁾ and calls the method used

¹⁾ Strangling of Persia, p. 176.

²⁾ The Reign of Terror in Tabriz: England's Responsibility.

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 464.

"barbaric". The Russian army of occupation crowned its deeds by an act of violence which can only be mentioned in the same breath with such acts as the cutting up of the Mahdi's body by the English: on the most sacred day of the Shiites, the 10th Muharram (January 1st, 1912) the venerable Sikat-ul-Islam the highest priest of the province of Azerbaijan was hanged together with seven other persons on a gallows which was decorated with Russian flags as for a holiday¹). A British journalist compares the effect of this execution on the Persians with that which would be produced on the English by the execution of the Archbishop of Canterbury on Good Friday²). Even in Downing Street these excesses were painfully resented, not from feelings of humanity but because it was feared that the execution would deeply hurt the feelings of the British Mahommedans and principally because their consequences might lead to an occupation of Teheran by the Russians³).

Sir G. Buchanan declared to the Russian foreign minister:

"The execution of this highplaced ecclesiastic struck me as being a most unfortunate occurrence as well as a grave blunder. It was almost certain to arouse intense indignation throughout Persia and one of the first consequences would be that the present Government who had done so much to conciliate Russia would be unable to face the storm and would have to resign. It also seemed probable that the Russian authorities would be represented as having caused Sikat-ul-Islam to be executed for the express purpose of provoking popular resentment and thus bringing about fresh disorders which would furnish them with the necessary pretext for occupying Teheran⁴)."

While these atrocities which were continued for months held the population of the North in a state of abject terror and completely intimidated them, the curtain descends slowly on Teheran and the Shuster episode. Parliament was forcibly closed, public meetings and the majority of the newspapers

¹) See Browne *Persian Press and Poetry*, p. 335; *English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 44*.

²) As Shuster quotes (*Strangling of Persia*, p. 202). The comparison was first made by Professor Browne.

³) *English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 52*.

⁴) *English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 32*.

were prohibited and at Christmas 1911 Shuster's dismissal took place and with it the acceptance of the Russian ultimatum.

With this the most hopeful chapter in the more recent history of Persia came to a close. Shuster himself terminates the reminiscences contained in his book with a bitter resumé addressed to England and Russia¹).

"With a knowledge of the facts of Persia's downfall the scales will drop from the eyes of the most incredulous and it is clear that Persia was the helpless victim of the wretched game of cards which a few European powers with the skill of centuries of practice still play with weaker nations as the stake and the lives, honour, and progress of whole races as the forfeit."

* * *

¹) Shuster, *Strangling of Persia*, p. 192.

II.

Parliament was broken up and remained so. It was not called together again for two years. Ministers changed half a dozen times in a year according to how Russia and England were satisfied with their readiness to obey their wishes. Whenever Anglo-Russian demands met with resistance, fresh troops were ordered into the country and Persia had to give way.

After the dismissal of Shuster, when Europe was completely occupied with its own troubles, England and Russia first of all cleared the Persian administration of all undesirables. Shuster's American helpers had declared themselves in agreement with him and had left of their own accord with one single exception, that of the instructor of the Gendarmerie, Merrill, whom we shall meet again later on. Shuster was replaced by the Belgian Mornard, until then Director General of Customs, who now, strange to say united in his person his previous office and the very onerous post of Treasurer General, drawing of course the salaries attached to both positions. The English minister had "always found him satisfactory"¹⁾ and declared "in view of the harmonious manner in which he has hitherto worked with the two legations his appointment would be the most practical in the circumstances"²⁾. The Persians who opposed to the utmost the appointment of an Anglo-Russian protégé³⁾ were faced by the accomplished fact.

¹⁾ Six months later Sir W. Townley cabled a report on Mornard to Grey which is hardly an acknowledgment of his services (English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 275.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia Nc. 3 (1912) No. 245a.

³⁾ English Blue Books (Persia) No. 3 (1912) No. 35. The English minister to Grey: „A provisional committee has been appointed by the Persian Government to take over from Shuster. This committee consists of 5 persons and excludes Mornard.“ See also No. 65 of this Blue Book. "Persian Government objects to appointment of Mornard as Treasurer General. They express the hope that this appointment will not be pressed by the two Governments" (Grey to English Ambassador at St. Petersburg).

The next preoccupation was the removal of people who in other countries are called patriots, as their desires, which were directed only towards the welfare of their own country rather than the "harmonious manner of working with the two legations" (as Sir G. Barclay expressed it so charmingly), traversed the pretty design of a rapid partition of Persia: the leaders of the democratic party.

Twenty of these inconvenient patriots were exiled from Teheran in the spring of 1912 or at least urgently invited to take a trip to Europe! ¹⁾ Amongst them there were Hussein Kuli Khan Nawwab²⁾ Wahid-ul-Mulk, Suleiman Mirza and Sardar Mohy, the hopes of the Young-Persian party ³⁾.

According to the opinion of England and Russia, the final word on the subject of the definite destruction of Persian liberty could now be pronounced. The empty state of the Persian exchequer and the claims to compensation which the two powers (who had really caused the disturbances by concentrating their troops) made on the Persian Government for damage done to Anglo-Russian property, offered a welcome pretext for extorting new demands in return for the payment of insignificant amounts. Grey is prepared to grant an Anglo-Russian loan of £ 200,000 (!) if Persia:

1. employs the £ 100,000 granted by England for the organisation of the Swedish Gendarmerie in the South, that is to say chiefly for British commercial purposes.

2. If the Shah who had fled to Russia and whose friendliness towards Russia was feared by Grey, again received a pension from Persia.

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 128. The new English minister Sir W. Townley having admitted that nothing could be proved against these men, adds: "The moment was considered a favourable one to pay off old scores and to eliminate from the political arena all the leading members of the party which had made itself conspicuous in the former Assembly by its adherence to the Shuster programme and by its uncompromising hostility to Russia."

²⁾ Now Persian Minister in Berlin. The "New Statesman" calls him (Nov. 29th 1915) one of the most estimable of Persian statesmen.

³⁾ English Blue Books No. 1 (1913) No. 126.

3. If an amnesty were granted to the Shah's bands and if all irregular troops (who might perhaps fight for the cause of Persia) were disarmed.

4. If Persia recognize the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907¹⁾.

Sir G. Barclay cannot refrain from calling Russia's proposal to pay these £ 200,000 in small instalments and to make the interest 8 % a "clumsy arrangement"²⁾. He even advocates, for chivalry is England's greatest virtue, lowering the rate of interest to 7 % (!) and Persia yielding to "force majeure" after a really pitiable struggle about the wording of the recognition of the assurances given in the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907³⁾, accepts on March 20th, 1912, the new Anglo-Russian note on condition that the Anglo-Russian troops be withdrawn from Persia territory in the shortest possible time⁴⁾.

Neither Russia nor England dreamt of complying with this request which was only too well justified. In nearly every more important note of Persia the attention of England and Russia was drawn to the fact that the general insecurity in the country was chiefly to be traced to the disturbing effect of the presence of foreign troops. Even Sir G. Buchanan represented to Mr. Sazonoff on January 20th, 1912, that Russia has given the assurance of a withdrawal of her troops from Kazvin and that the state of the Southern trade routes so frequently pointed out by England would not have become so neglected, if Russia's proceedings in the North had not had a disturbing effect on the people⁵⁾.

Russia's reply after obtaining information from the Russian minister at Teheran, M. Poklewski-Koziell⁶⁾ was a cruel mockery of the Persian point of view. "The Persian Government," Sir G. Buchanan was informed on February 23rd 1912, "would be

¹⁾ English Blue Books, Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 154.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 181.

³⁾ Grey had proposed that the Persian Government should "gladly" recognize the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907.

⁴⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 316.

⁵⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 111.

⁶⁾ M. Poklewski-Koziell, perhaps the only Polish Diplomatist of Russia, was a friend of King Edward VII.

glad to have a Russian force at hand that could reach the capital in three days".¹⁾

It need hardly be said that it was jealousy, not sympathy for Persia, or respect for fairplay, that made England propose the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Persia. It will be proved later on how little England really troubled about the agreement made with Russia in 1907. From the perusal of the Blue Books the impression is gained that England feared the return of the Shah more than Persia did. For the Ex-shah is pro-Russian.

England did not dream of withdrawing her own troops from Southern Persia in spite of Persia's repeated requests, in spite of the attacks made on these troops²⁾, and of the excitement among the warlike tribes of Fars. The English minister made the withdrawal of these troops conditional on the support which the gendarmerie under the command of the Swedish officers would find³⁾.

In July 1912 there were collected in Tabriz alone 1500 Russian troops with artillery, although no state of war existed in Persia and thousands more were stationed on different points of Northern Persia. Every unfriendly act directed against Russia, every local dispute was used by these troops as a pretext for violating the local authorities concerned. In Resht Russian troops destroyed the plant of the newspapers and prohibited the latter. At Meshed there occurred in March 1912 an excess which was the culmination of these horrors and produced an indescribably painful impression throughout the Muslim world.⁴⁾

A priest together with his adherents had taken refuge in the shrine of the Imam Riza and was therefore according to the old Persian law, observed for centuries, inviolable. Even England and Russia had appealed over and over again to the validity of this old Persian tradition, which ranks as an international agreement and of which they took advantage

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 5 (1912) No. 222.

²⁾ For which handsome indemnities were extorted from Persia. These were deducted in the first place from the new loans.

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 39.

⁴⁾ Browne, Persian Press and Poetry, page 336.

for their own protégés. The commander of the Russian troops thereupon ordered the Persian National Sanctuary¹⁾ to be bombarded, whereby many innocent people and pilgrims were killed and wounded.

The notorious chief of a band, Shuja-ed-Dowleh had with Russian help arbitrarily appointed himself Governor of the town and exercised a reign of terror for miles around for years which stifled every movement towards freedom²⁾. It was owing to him and Russian arbitrariness that Khorassan and principally Azerbaijan, the richest province of Persia, did not contribute a single penny in 1911/12 towards the requirements of the Central Government. When the Cabinet sent the Sipahdar as Governor of Azerbaijan to Tabriz, Shuja-ed-Dowleh forced prominent citizens to put their names to declarations of sympathy for himself which he did not, as might have been presumed, forward to his own government but to the Russian foreign minister, to the Viceroy of the Caucasus, to the Russian minister at Teheran and to the French consul³⁾. Only when the Persian Government conceded the increase of the Cossack-Brigade, which Persia had to finance and which never had fought for Persian but for Russian interests alone, Russia exercised pressure on Shuja-ed-Dowleh in favour of the governor nominated by the Persian Government⁴⁾. Since 1912 Persia obtained fresh funds from the only lenders to whom it was allowed to apply only at a rate of 7%. Owing to the muddle to which the Teheran Government had been forced, things came to such a pass that recourse was had every few weeks to relatively small sums, which were subsequently to be wiped out by a larger loan, the price of which rose, however,

1) Lord Curzon devotes no less than 7 pages to the description of this shrine in his work "Persia" (II page 154 and onwards).

2) How many executions this obedient adept of Russia has on his conscience it would be difficult to ascertain. His bloodthirstiness went too far even for the rather "blasés" English consuls at Tabriz. When Shuja ed-Dowleh in September 1913 again held orgies of executions of completely innocent subjects, the English consul wrote: "A painful impression is created among the European colony here by such executions." English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 313.

3) English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 239.

4) English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 236

in proportion to Anglo-Russian cupidity. In July already Russia announced the demand for the Julfa-Tabriz-Urmia railway concession, which the Persian Government primarily designated as undebatable¹⁾ but which it made dependent afterwards upon the consent of parliament (which at the time was non-existent²⁾).

The advances on loans were generally used up rapidly owing to the growing demands of Russia and England in Persia. An idea is obtained of the greed with which the two great powers threw themselves on defenceless Persia, when one reads the note of the English minister dictated by Grey and addressed to the Persian Government on September 20th, 1912³⁾. First comes the announcement that the Anglo-Indian troops would presently be ordered from Isfahan to Shiraz and that on the Persian Government would devolve the duty of "securing suitable accomodation" for the English troops, otherwise barracks would be erected in Shiraz at the expense of Persia!

Russia as well as England, who in order to balance the Russian concession claims wanted to force from Persia the railway concession Mohammerah-Khoremabad, was angered at the hesitation of the Persian Cabinet.

§§ A complaisant man was looked for and they reverted to Saad-ed-Dowleh, that reactionary minister of the Ex-Shah, whom the stormy indignation of the people had swept from the country together with that personage. This cynical idea was hatched and discussed by Sazonoff, Grey and Crewe in London. The terms agreed upon on the appointment of this minister were a mockery of all decent feeling. They were (in Grey's words):

1. an undertaking by Saad not to place obstacles in the way of the effective and honest administration of the finances of Persia and:

2. an assurance that in this event both he and the governors appointed by him will receive the moral (!) support of both governments and of their agents in all parts of Persia⁴⁾.

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 233.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 276.

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 349.

⁴⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 346.

The self appointed arbiters of Persia's destinies did not feel any too happy in defending this mean proposal. On October 5th already Grey admitted that Saad-ed-Dowlehs' past was "none too perfect" and he added when this minister "by the grace of England and Russia" had arrived in Teheran and was now to be forced on the Persian Government, who resisted with might and main: "The only justification for the action which we have taken with a view to the appointment of Saad-ed-Dowleh as Prime Minister is the fact that money is absolutely necessary to the Persian Government". To remove all doubt, why it was intended to help Persia once more, he adds in the same breath, that immediately on the acceptance of the Anglo Russian demands for concessions *through Saad-ed-Dowleh*, advances would be granted¹⁾.

In this race for concessions Russia won. The concession of the Julfa-Tabriz-Urmia Railway was signed on February 6th, 1913; England later on obtained at first only an option on the Mohammerah-Khoremasabad Railway. Both concessions, having been granted without the consent of Parliament, were according to the new Persian constitution invalid. The convocation of Parliament was prevented by Sazonoff, who was anxious that a more stable government (meaning Saad-ed-Dowleh) should be formed²⁾. A considerable time passed before a cabinet could be found which was ready to take upon itself this trading in the well established and sworn rights of the people³⁾.

The Anglo Russian system, already sufficiently characterized, of keeping the existing cabinet above water by dearly bought loans and advances of a completely insufficient nature — from which were deducted at once all manners of claims for damages, the expense of the Cossack Brigade or the Gendarmerie, which were used for these powers own ends — necessarily caused a complete stoppage of all Persian government business and that weakening of the central power, which had

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 423.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 361.

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 513. "The new cabinet will draw down great unpopularity on its head by granting the railway concessions" (Townley to Grey, January 6th, 1913.)

always been aimed at by the Anglo-Russian neighbours. The relations of the governors of the provinces to the Government at Teheran became more indefinite. Where funds could not be brought in at once in the old Oriental way, the governor — if he did not want to use his own fortune — saw himself degraded to a dummy, with whom the powerful heads of tribes or such disturbers of the peace, as Salar-ed Dowleh, who still haunted Persia, could do as they liked.

The part for instance, played for months by the Governor General of Kermanshah, Prince Farman Farma, in his dealings with Salar-ed-Dowleh was absolutely pitiable. There were no means at his disposal for supporting reliable troops; the volunteers had long been disarmed by Anglo-Russian orders. So battles occurred for months between the men collected by Farman Farma and the followers of Salar-ed-Dowleh which the English consul describes as follows: "The two armies, when they came in sight of each other, fired at each other, then fled incontinently, Mujallal winning, because he looked round first and discovered that he and the enemy were playing the same game¹⁾." At last Prince Salar-ed-Dowleh who had been defeated a dozen times and whom the English minister Townley called a "slippery customer", Ala-es-Sultaneh "a lunatic²⁾ and the Russian chargé d'affaires an "impossible person"³⁾ was offered the post of Governor of the Ghilan Province and then that of Resht upon pressure from St. Petersburg and in spite of all protests from the Persian Government!

The disturbances provoked by this princely rebel, who always turned up again, continued well into 1913. He was, to complete the mockery, supported by the Persian cossacks⁴⁾ stationed in Astrabad, men of that brigade which Russia wanted to have augmented in December 1912 to 4300 men⁵⁾ and for whose slight value Persia had to pay heavily, according

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 166.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 89.

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 216.

⁴⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 88.

⁵⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 520.

to the words of the Russian chargé d'affaires ¹⁾). Russian officers were in command of these troops!

This edifying comedy only came to an end in the autumn of 1913. Salar-ed-Dowleh, who had taken refuge in the Russian Consulate of Kermanshah was conducted to Russia and thence departed to Switzerland, with a yearly pension extorted from Persia.

While Russia, with the help of jealous agents and complaisant governors like Shuja-ed-Dowleh, who about the end of 1913 suppressed by approved Russian methods the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan claimed by the Bakhtiars, got ready to swallow the fat North Persian morsel and furthered the peaceful penetration "by purchase" of North Persian villages and settlement of Russian families²⁾, England thought to have won in the person of Mukhber-es-Súltaneh a Governor General for Fars who through his system of government should make good the "prejudice" to English commercial interests in the South about which England had complained for years. "A man possessed of sound ideas and theories" he was called by Major O'Connor, the British Consul at Shiraz ³⁾ and the English minister attributed to his quiet and unobtrusive work the reconciliation of the most divergent groups of interests and the furtherance of general welfare in the Fars province ⁴⁾.

Months passed of course before Mukhber could enter upon his position. In consequence of the miserable finance of the Treasurer General, Mornard, there were not even funds for the instalment of the Governor General of Fars. England helped by making him a direct advance, which was naturally to be deducted from future loans and to be refunded from receipt of taxes in the province ⁵⁾. The expenses were checked by

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 131 M. Sabline says on April 3rd, 1917, to Sir W. Townley: More use should be made of the Cossack Brigade which costs the Persian Government a large sum of money and is of small practical value. And he adds ingenuously: It is generally recognised that Russia is behind the Cossack Brigade.

²⁾ In the spring of 1913 the Russians bought the villages Shirenk, Marakalateh, Bagharabad, Fazilabad, and Nukan and settled 360 families there. English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 143.

³⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 512.

⁴⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 234.

⁵⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1913) No. 416.

Mornard's agent in Shiraz, a man named Stas, a Belgian like Mornard himself.

England, by rendering the governor financially dependent on London and independent of Teheran, as Russia did in Kermanshah¹⁾, transferred her policy of thumbscrews which had proved so successful with the central government to the province. A similar course was followed in the case of the Persian gendarmerie under Swedish command. A separate account was opened at the "Imperial Persian Bank" (a purely English concern) from which (under the control of the Treasurer General) all payments to the Gendarmerie-Commandos were to be made. These funds were of course supplied by Persia out of an English advance at the rate of 7% on the next large loan.

In this way the highest official of the province and the police troops, who unlike the Persian Cossack Brigade were quite popular with the Persians²⁾, and the only really useful military force, appeared to be entirely at the mercy of England and her Belgian henchmen.

The net was spread and regardless of Persian protests England committed another violation of rights in spite of the recognizedly good work of the Gendarmerie³⁾, viz the removal of the 7. Radjputs from Baluchistan to Bushire⁴⁾.

Seized by two pincers, whose prongs closed tighter and tighter, with a depleted exchequer, deprived of her most capable politicians, without a parliament⁵⁾, and with a ruler not yet of age, Persia saw the horrible dawn of the world war.

¹⁾ Which transferred about £ 6000 monthly through the Russian Bank direct to the Governor General for administrative purposes (See English Blue Book Persia I (1913) No. 500.

²⁾ On the occasion of a review the English ambassador reports to London: "The review in the presence of the Shah aroused enthusiasm among all classes of Persians, who had watched a Persian Cossack review on the previous day with marked indifference."

³⁾ The English minister Sir Walter Townley reported on January 17th, 1913, to Grey: They (the Swedes) are all smart soldiers keen on their work." English Blue Books Persia No. I (1914) No. 539.

⁴⁾ Protest of the Persian Government in the English Blue Books Persia No. I (1914) No. 204.

⁵⁾ The new elections were again postponed end of 1913. English Blue Books Persia No. I (1914) No. 336.

III

England's policy in Persia before the outbreak of the World war was in the main determined by one factor: jealousy. When France, in agreement with the Sultan of Mascat, attempted to create a point of support for her fleet in the Persian Gulf near Jissa, the English admiral intervened and threatened to bombard the place. England had been watching with the most intense displeasure the construction of the Baghdad railroad, which she had declined to finance jointly with Turkey and Germany. According to the Times of May 23nd 1911, she had no right to tell any state what railways it should build. England tried to retard as much as lay in her power the construction of the last part of the line (Baghdad-Bazra)¹⁾. When the German firm of Woenckhaus & Co. successfully applied itself in the Persian Gulf to the buying and exporting of mother of pearl shells, the English regarded this peaceful commerce in their "mare clausum" as an infringement of their rights. They opposed it by armed force, basing their action on their elastic treaties with the East-Arabian chieftains. The first sailing of the "Hapag", took place in 1906. Arrangements for regular service from Hamburg to Arabia and the Persian Gulf were greeted by the "Times" with ill concealed annoyance. It was imputed to the Hamburg-America Line that it was subsidised by government and that consequently political interests were at stake. Every means seemed justified to weaken German trade which, meanwhile, attained third place among the nations trading with Persia.

¹⁾ Whigham (The Persian problem, London 1903). The correspondent of "The Morning Post" says: Because we gave up the idea of a Mesopotamian Railway ourselves, we cannot with any show of reason oppose the German or the so-called German scheme. We are right, however, to bring it about, if possible, that such a railway should terminate at a port more or less under British protection. If it terminates on Turkish soil, we may be bothered with innumerable complications in the future.

England's principal opponent, however, was Russia. Together they had marked out the boundary limits in the notorious treaty of 1907 — within which peaceful penetration of Persia was to have been carried out. England had repeatedly protested against the Ex-Shah's attempts to return to power whilst Russia had received extensive promises from him in case of his recovering the throne.

Protests had also been made by England against the occupation of the Northern provinces by Russian troops, as well as against the illegal collection of taxes in Persia by Russian Consular officials. The wishes thus formulated which were quite in accordance with those of the Persian Government itself, were not inspired by a desire for Persia's welfare. England as ever only thought of herself. For the consequences of the miserable compact of 1907, which could only have been dictated by a fear of Germany, are becoming more fatal. England is forced to sanction every Russian act of transgression and exposes herself in consequence to a considerable loss of prestige in the Mohammedan world. In spite of, or perhaps because of yielding, she sees the Russian steamroller approaching steadily nearer from Northern Persia and her monopoly in the Persian Gulf threatened by the allied power to which she has given herself over body and soul. The work of her cleverest Oriental politicians is gravely endangered. George Brandes sums up Grey's policy in his essay on Persia in "Politiken" of November 29th, 1916, pointedly: "A political action must be salutary at least, if it be not moral. Grey's Persian policy is neither."

England sought her own interests in Persia, by secretly putting obstacles in the way of the Russian partner. She brought her influence to bear on throwing over pro-Russian ministers and governors and on replacing them by anglophile officials and an anglophile Cabinet. She frustrated Russian railway and road schemes. She intentionally dragged out the negotiations regarding the ominous Trans-Persian Railway project. No money is spared to win over the most warlike tribe in Persia, the Bakhtiars, to whom she had already given an interest in the proceeds of the oilfields, so as to play off their weighty influence against Russia. As the latter has the Persian

Cossack Brigade, Persian only in name, under her absolute control, England attempts to create a counterpart against these troops in the shape of the Gendarmerie, commanded by Swedish officers, whom she pays out of the Persian loans for which usurious interests are charged and to ensure its use throughout the whole of Persia. If the gendarmerie does not at once obey every wave of an English hand, their pay is kept back, in spite of the agreement made with Persia and Sweden, and a loud complaint is voiced about the impossibility of obtaining funds for these troops called into being by the pressure of England.

The *strictly confidential* reports on the situation in Persia of the English minister in Teheran afford an interesting insight into the *backstairs Politics of England*. These documents are also a source of graphic information as to the events during the last months before the war and at its outbreak. Sir Walter Townley, like his colleague Marling, has replaced "too sensitive" diplomatic representatives of England at the court of Teheran. He has recently been sent to the Hague, as the man with the strong hand "to shake up the patriotic and national spirit of the Dutch people, and to show them that this spirit ought to be on the allies' side." (Morning Post.)

We herewith give Townley's circular in the original.

Circular No. 1.

Tehran, 23rd. March 1914.

The following résumé of the political situation is being sent to British Consuls at Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz, Meshed, Kerman and Bushire for their very confidential information. A similar circular will be addressed to them, monthly if possible, though no definite period can as yet be fixed.

"Political situation is as follows:—

Persian affairs are giving rise to some awkward questions between Russia and England. Relations locally are not quite so united as in past. New Russian minister¹⁾ is somewhat pecu-

¹⁾ Korostovetz: Minister at Peking in 1912. where he created a highly unpleasant sensation in the European colony, by eloping, although a married man, with the daughter of the Chinese Postmaster-General Piry. The father forced him, revolver in hand, to a divorce. Korostovetz was then sent to Urga as diplomatic agent for Mongolia by way of a disciplinary punishment.

liar in his attitude—see interview in the Persian newspaper copy of which is being sent to you. We support Ain-ed-Dowleh, gendarmerie, and the Bakhtiari. Russians are now opposed to Ain-ed-Dowleh: talk of limiting the gendarmerie by keeping them out of the north and are becoming jealous of our friendliness with the Bakhtiari. Ain-ed-Dowleh is held in office by us and will do anything for us. H. M. G. are negotiating about the Gendarmerie at Petersburg with a view to their being employed throughout Persia. Russia wants Cossack brigade to be increased so that they may take place of the gendarmerie in the north. Bakhtiari are all well in hand. Their recent appointments to Isfahan and Kerman and the return of the Ilkhani¹⁾ to his duties were brought about by this legation. Shaokats appointment to Seistan and Hashmat-ul-Mulk's arrest²⁾ were arranged through Ain-ed-Dowleh's subserviency. Regents' main object is to crown Shah next July and to leave country. He feared that new Mejlis might vote postponement of the Shah's majority involving the Regent's resignation and the election of a tool of their own: he therefore put off elections so that opening of the Mejlis might be as near coronation as possible: Tehran elections are now completed. Democratic element is entirely eliminated. Provincial elections will follow at once but Tabriz is almost certain to refuse to send deputies³⁾.

Position at Tabriz is most unsatisfactory owing to attitude of defiance and the independence of Shuja supported by Russia.

Persian Govt's financial difficulties are very great. Mor-nard is doing good work. It is hard to find money for the gendarmerie whose budget now amounts to about £ 600,000 per annum.

1) The chief Khan of the Bachtari: Sardar-i-Jang to whom was intrusted the maintenance of security of the so-called "Lynch Road".

2) The Persians mentioned here are old rivals: Shaokat passes as Anglo-phile, hence his nomination as Governor of Seistan. Hashmat-ul-Mulk who was arrested at the instigation of England is reactionary and Russophile.

3) As already mentioned, the usurper of Tabriz, the Russian protégé Shuja-ed-Dowleh prevented the parliamentary elections in Tabriz. from taking place.

Trans-Persian railway scheme¹⁾ is causing difficulties, and negotiations in London and Petersburg do not seem to lead to an agreement. Russia desires line to run from Kerman to Charhar but H. M. G. are opposed to terminus being east of Bender Abbas.

P. G. can obtain £100,000 from a British syndicate for the Kerman mining concession 377²⁾ augmentation 3021 of private 8430 by Russia acting on behalf of Société d'Etudes.

Gendarmerie have sent force of 1200 men to Burajird. Nizam-es-Sultaneh³⁾ is to go there as Governor of Arabistan and Luristan.

Yezd is promised to Bakhtiaris in April.

Naib⁴⁾ Hussein is getting anxious at Kashan owing to gradual closing in around him and is appealing to P. G. to be allowed to proceed to Kerbela.

Gendarmerie have sent officer to Isfahan to prepare for extension there.

Fars' situation continues to give anxiety. B. C.⁵⁾ does not hesitate to show his authority when necessary. G. G.⁶⁾ has not proved success and a more pliable person is being sought. Present minister of Finance may be found most suitable person⁷⁾ and his absence from the capital will strengthen Ained-Dowleh of whom he is an opponent. Recent affairs at Kazerun and the regrettable loss of a Swedish officer will not I hope have any far reaching results though trouble is not yet at an end.

¹⁾ Reference is made here to a question of the railway project of Baku-Nushki (Baluchistan) which was to be financed by the Société d'Etudes, Paris, with Anglo-French-Russian money.

²⁾ The British Consul in Shiraz has left the original cipher and has put a note of interrogation in the margin of his draft, applying to this number and the next three words.

³⁾ The former Governor-General of Fars, whence he was driven by English intrigue, is now Commander-General of the Persian forces fighting on the Turkish side.

⁴⁾ Reference is made to Naib Hussein, the notorious Bandit chief.

⁵⁾ British Consul.

⁶⁾ Mukhber-es-Sultaneh, Governor General.

⁷⁾ Vossuk-ed-Dowleh, now again Prime Minister.

There is some anxiety lest ex-Shah may return but the Russian Govt have given most categorical assurances that he will not have Russian support. Salar¹⁾ also threatens to return.

The peculiar remarks made by the Russian Minister in the course of the interview displeased the English Minister so much that he thought it necessary to send a copy of the article to the British Consul. The Persian journalist put the most awkward questions to the Minister, questions which for a long time have been causing anxiety to the Persian Government: the withdrawal of Russian troops from Northern Persia; the return of the Ex-Shah; the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907, Constitutionalism, the Gendarmerie, the New Loan, and the Railway Concession extorted by means of the same and finally the deposition of the Russian favorite Shuja-ed-Dowleh, that monster who, with the consent of his Russian masters "subjected to torture, put to the wheel and hanged members of the Diet, put to the wheel and gouged out the eyes of priests still alive and who had cut one of the National Volunteers right in two, exposing both halves of the body in different places" (George Brandes, *Politiken*, November 29th, 1916.)

To most of these questions Korostovetz had cheerful, equivocal answers at hand. The Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907 guaranteed in the first place Persia's integrity. (The Englishman, Whigham, remarked sarcastically that no Under-secretary of State was legitimized, unless he had the words "integrity" or "status quo" on his lips). *But it was questionable whether integrity could be maintained.* The Persian Constitution was recognized by the protecting powers. *But perhaps it would become necessary to alter the Constitution.* Magnificent, however, and really dazzling in its Muscovite honesty is his observation on the question of the unlawful occupation of Northern Persia by Russian troops, to which special emphasis is given by the Persian journalist. "The Russian Government" says Korostovetz, "would do better to spend the five million roubles for the benefit of their own people rather than on splitting up their troops in a foreign country".

¹⁾ Salar-ed-Dowleh, brother of the Ex-Shah, after causing protracted revolts, was pensioned off by the Persian Government owing to the pressure of Russia and England, and afterwards lived in exile in Switzerland.

The interview given in the leading article of the Tehran newspaper "Raad" of March 10th, 1914, is reproduced herewith from the copy attached by Sir Walter Townley.

Resumé of leading article in the journal "Raad" No. 41—34 of March 10th 1914¹⁾.

Interview with M. Korostovetz, the Russian minister
at Teheran.

In asking the opinion of the minister on the merits and characteristics of the Persians he said they were very kind, hospitable and pleasant, and contrary to his former belief they were not fanatic and had no anti-European feelings. But they were not industrious and naturally prefer idleness to activity.

The correspondent asked the minister to explain, if possible, the policy of the Russian Govt. to him which he said he could not do so, but he has been instructed to strengthen the friendly relations and cooperate in carrying out reforms. The correspondent asked him about the Russian military occupation of Northern Persia. The minister said that he was in favour of evacuation of Persian territories by Russian troops, and his Majesty has also instructed him to facilitate means of this purpose and the F. O.²⁾ has also instructed him to do so. The viceroy of Caucasia and the ex-prime minister who is the Minister of Finance joined him in that belief. *It would be better that the 5,000,000 roubles, which is spent on troops in Persia, should be spent on the progress and civilization of the country of Russia.*

He asked him about the ex-shah. The minister replied that he had lately gone to St. Petersburg and asked for assistance of the Russian Govt. to return to Persia, but he was replied that he had to leave the idea of returning to Persia entirely. The minister was sure that the Russian authorities won't support him at all.

The minister was asked if he thought Persian Constitution injurious to economical and political interests of Russia. He

¹⁾ This English translation of the interview was enclosed with the circular of the British minister. We reproduce the translation, which evidently has been made by a Persian, word for word.

²⁾ Foreign Office.

said that the two neighbouring powers had recognized the Persian constitution, therefore they had no opposition to it. But they were afraid the country would go into anarchy again. If the anarchy returns, the Russian authorities intend to modify the constitution and change the Parliamentary laws.

Regarding the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 the Russian minister said that the first aim of it was to preserve integrity of Persia. But as regards its future effects on Persia it was impossible to say and it was difficult to prophecy. The Persians had to put aside their personal interest and try for the country. He was sure that there were persons in Persia who were so competent that none could be found even in Russia. If Persians were helpless to administer their own country, of course natural proceedings would be unexpected.

The correspondent asked him about the Russian Govts' policy in the neutral zone, which he said they had no definite policy.

When he was asked about Persian Gendarmerie he replied that he had no opposition to it. But in the beginning it was said that the Gendarmerie was meant for roads only, but now the scheme is quite changed, and it is understood that the Gendarmerie in future will take the place of a big force. Therefore it is necessary that he should enter into the question with the Persian, British and Swedish Govts.

As regards the big Persian loan, he said that its fulfillment depends on two points: —

1. that the budget should be regulated.
2. that the question of Railways shd. settled.

Regarding the Trans-Persian Railway he said that the British Govt. wants it to be constructed from northwestern parts to the south and the Persian Gulf, but the Russian Govt. should like it to be made from the north-west to the south-east.

Regarding Haji Shuja-ed-Dowleh and Azerbaijan, the minister said that it was Shuja-ed-Dowleh only who could restore orders in Tabriz and the province.

In his next circular of June 26th, 1914, dated from his summer residence Gulhek the English Minister shows the Anglo-Russian cards still more. Persia, living from hand to mouth,

requires money. Already on December 25th, 1915, Sir Walter Townley, confident of victory, telegraphed to Sir E. Grey: "Want of money may compel the Persian Government to sign the railway concessions any day." When no cabinet could be found to take upon itself this new squandering of Persian rights, Saad-ed-Dowleh, whom the hatred of the people had driven out of the country together with the Ex-Shah, was recalled from exile to Teheran on the suggestion of Grey as a most pliable tool. But the Regent Nasr-ul-Mulk, — he was a friend of Grey's although not as unscrupulous as he, — refused to recognise a cabinet formed by Saad-ed-Dowleh. Russia by an advance of funds precipitately granted, obtained the Julfa-Tabriz railway concession; English appetite was only half appeased by the option on the Mohammerah-Khorembad railway line which had been extorted with difficulty.

The circular runs as follows:

Very Confidential.

Circular Nr. 2.

Gulhek, June 26. 1914.

Ref. my Confdl. Circular of March 23.

"With the approach of the date of the Coronation the situation in the capital is very obscure. The Govt: is in sore financial difficulty and it is not apparent from what source money can be found. H. M. G. appears indisposed to give any assistance and the P. G. will not seek the help of Russia, because it is feared that assistance rendered from that quarter would be accompanied by demands for certain concessions, notably those of the navigation of Lake Urumia, the rectification of the Russo—Persian frontier in the neighbourhood of the Moghan Steppes, together with certain irrigation works and a land concession, and the Karkunan irrigation scheme for diverting the waters of the Karun from a source near the Kuh-i-Rang into the Isfahan Plain.

The Cabinet is very disunited on the various questions, but more especially upon the method that should be adopted to protest against Russian action in the Province of Azerbaijan, where the G. G. ¹⁾ under Russian protection, has made himself

¹⁾ Governor General.

practically independent of the Tehran Government and where, under orders from St. Petersburg, the Russian Consulate General collects the land tax from Russian subjects, protected persons, and from Persians who have leased their lands to such persons. The same mode of collection has been put in force in other places in the Russian zone. Post Offices have also been opened by Russia at Tehran, Tabriz and, it is said, at Meshed.

Reports received from the provinces show that the elections are proceeding very slowly, and there would appear to be but small hope that the necessary quorum of the new Majliss will be present in Tehran in time for the Shah to take the constitutional oath before that body. It is therefore proposed to have recourse to a mixed assembly of the old and new Majliss for the purpose, a somewhat doubtful proceeding which may possibly give rise in the future to a question as to the validity of the Coronation. The Regent is, however, determined that the ceremony must not be postponed, and proposed to leave for Europe immediately after it. It is not clear who will form the first Cabinet of the new reign. The Russians strongly support Saad-ud-Dowleh, but there is reason to believe that the young Shah favours rather Mustofi-ul-Mamalek."

The closing passage of this circular in which Townley announces the second division of Persia and the revision of the treaty of 1907, after having just waxed indignant at Azerbaijan having been laid under contribution by the Russians in opposition to all international law, must be read with special attention as an example of the manner in which England and Russia maintain the principle of nationalities announced by them just before the outbreak of the world war:

"There is reason to believe that London & St. Petersburg are about to go thoroughly into the Persian question, with a view to seeing in what way it may be necessary to revise or qualify the understanding of 1907 in such a manner as to meet present requirements. The necessity for this action has been caused by the attitude lately assumed by Russia in N. Persia, and also partly perhaps by the fact that H. M. G., by the arrangement recently made with the A. P. O. C., has assumed

certain fresh responsibilities in S. Persia which must be protected.

There are indications that some of the important tribes of the S. are seeking to band themselves together, presumably in anticipation of possible developments in the N. after the Coronation, which they fear may affect their interests adversely. There are also indications that certain of these tribes are desirous of entering upon closer relations with H. M. G.

Sd—W. Townley."

In other words, as Russia has avowedly committed breaches of international law in Northern Persia, England demands concessions from her at the expense of Persia in the neutral zone as balm for her wounded sense of justice. For, of what nature are the obligations, so delicately hinted at, which England took over? What agreement has the English Government arrived at with the A. P. O. C. ?

The A. P. O. C. (Anglo Persian Oil Company) is nothing but the English Government itself, who stands behind the Company founded in 1909, when the immense oil wells in Southern Persia were opened (extending in the direction of Shushter to Bender Abbas). On June 18th, 1914, the proposal of the English government that Great Britain should participate to the amount of £ 2,001 000 in the enterprise was accepted by 254 against 18 votes in the House of Commons.

The distribution of the share capital is the following:

English Government	£ 2 001 000
Other interests, preeminently the English Burmah	
Oil Co	£ 1 999 000
	<hr/>
	£ 4 000 000

The English Government, who have a representative of the Treasury and the Admiralty on the Board, who has the right of veto, have the majority with £ 2000 shares.

For the protection of these oil fields which according to the statement of the president of the A. P. O. C., Greenway, "are of such a yield as to be able to cope with more than all the requirement of the British Navy" the English advance into the

Irak was inaugurated. The "Economist" of December 11th, 1915, writes: The unfortunate Mesopotamian campaign was undertaken principally to protect the interests of the important oil fields which the admiralty had acquired.

The Persian Government was indemnified by 16 % of the yearly net profits, and the tribe of the Bakhtiars in whose territory were the wells of the also purely English offshoot the Bakhtiari Oil Co, with 3 % of the shares and a payment of £ 3000 p. a.

What remains of this net-profit for the Persian Government when as in 1915 the working of the wells is disturbed by the cutting of pipes (the work of some uncontrollable tribes), appears from the words of the chairman at the annual meeting of the A. P. O. C. (Morning Post December 21st 1915.): "The Persian Government were liable to make good to the company and to the producing companies the whole of the losses consequent upon the destruction of this oil and for the extra expenditure the company would be put to in consequence of the interruption."

* * *

The third circular of the English Minister Townley brings us right into the period of the world-war. The young Shah has been crowned and immediately after this the cabinet has resigned. The Regent, very accessible to English advice, has so ordered the parliamentary elections, that the new parliament is not fully assembled at the time of the coronation. Although as is stated in the circular No. 1 of March 23rd, 1914 "the democratic element is entirely eliminated in the new elections", that patriotic element which is so hostile to the Anglo-Russian loans at usurious rates of interest and to the bartering away of the last of the Persian rights¹⁾, no absolute security is felt even with respect to this new parliament. There are still too many patriots in Persia! The shortness of funds persists, that is to say, the danger of a new loan on ruinous terms, and besides, as Russia is plundering the richest province of Persia, Azer-

¹⁾ See the periodical "The New Statesman" January 1st, 1916, where it is stated: All competent observers have however admitted that the honester side in Persian politics, which is now along with much outlawed riff-raff pro-German, is the democratic one. For the parties and persons mentioned as being pro-Ally no respect can be entertained.

baijan, in a manner opposed to all international law, as England herself recognized, the new Prime Minister is unable to secure capable politicians for his cabinet, who naturally will not assume the responsibility for the unheard of brutalisation of a weak people by the honest heralds of the "principle of nationality."

Also the Gendarmerie under Swedish commanders, the elite troops of Persia, threatens to disband as the pay is not forthcoming regularly. Why is the pay not forthcoming? The Swedes in common with their Persian troops, unlike the Persian Cossack Brigade, do not consider themselves as in the employ of a foreign power, but rather as, in the first place, the protectors of Persia's welfare. But this does not agree with English interests and consequently they are kept on short commons by the Belgian creatures of England such as the Treasurer General Heynsens. The Colonel of Gendarmerie Merrill, the only American who had not declared himself in agreement with his chief and his compatriots, when the affair Morgan Shuster came to a head, writes on March 4th, 1915, to Major O'Connor, the British Consul at Shiraz: "From confidential and very reliable sources I learn that Heynsens, Treasurer General, will do his best in the next few weeks to prevent the Swedes getting any money for the gendarmerie so as to force all of the Swedes to go." And some months later the English Secretary of Legation Kerr¹⁾ informs this same Merrill, who immediately reports the remark to Shiraz, that they would now "see the gendarmerie in buggary" before they would let them get a shie of English money. (Merrill to Major O'Connor August 14th, 1915.) Thus the diplomatic representatives of England treat Swedish officers who have been called into the country at their own instigation!

We now reproduce the third circular of the English minister:

Nr. 3 Circular

Gulhek 22nd. Aug. 1914.

Very confidential

My confidential circular of June 26th.

Coronation passed off without any hitch and quite quietly. There not being a quorum of 70 of new Mejlis at Tehran, the

¹⁾ previously in Berlin and Rome.

oath of allegiance to constitution was taken before some 68 conjectural members of ? (the query is O'Connors) old Mejlis under a perhaps somewhat strained interpretation of that clause of the constitution which says that in the event of demise of a sovereign whilst a Mejlis is not in being the oath should be taken before old Mejlis. Ceremonial observed on occasion of coronation was very simple. Innovation was a banquet which Shah gave to heads of foreign missions all of whom with the exception of Italian chargé d'affaires had special letters 6915. . . . ing¹⁾ them as special representatives of their respective sovereigns for occasion, and their wives. Vahliad and cabinet-ministers were present at banquet as also Shah's uncle, Prince Nusrat-es-Saltaneh. Ala-es-Saltaneh continued in office after coronation but resignation of M. F. A.²⁾, Vossuk-ed-Dowleh, became effective and there was complete stagnation¹⁾ decisive affairs.

Cabinet was formed a few days ago by Mustafi-ul-Mamalik. Ala-es-Saltanah has assumed office of M. F. A. Prime Minister himself has taken over Home affairs. Remaining members of Cabinet are men of small importance. Muhtashem-es-Saltaneh is Minister of Finance, Sahab Ektiyar Minister of War, Zokar-el-Mulk Minister of Justice, Muhandes-el-Mamalik Minister of Commerce, and Shahab-ed-Dowleh Minister of Public Works, posts and telegraphs. In view of money stringency and situation created by Russia Prime minister was unable to secure cooperation of certain prominent politicians upon whom he had counted in accepting task of forming a cabinet.

Financial situation remains most critical. Treasury is entirely? (the query is O'Connors) depleted and it seems hard to imagine ? whence ? 8800 8158¹⁾ money can be found in present state of things in Europe. Swedish officers are making constant complaints that they cannot be held responsible for good behaviour of their men if they are not paid. They have threatened to seek permission of Swedish Govt. to withdraw if money is not forthcoming more regularly. Swedish Govt. having made an arrangement with H. M. G.³⁾ that officers

¹⁾ These words the British consul was unable to decipher.

²⁾ Minister Foreign Affairs.

³⁾ His Majesty's Government

shall remain in Persia until next March has disapproved of minatory step taken but it is hard to see how service can be carried on if funds are not found. Arrangement made with H. M. G. is in sense that between now and next March some settlement will be made under which scope of action of gendarmerie will be satisfactorily determined with Russia and financial question established on a sound basis. H. M. G. have advanced £ 50,000 for use of gendarmerie in Fars and Kerman.

Activity of finance administration is hampered by action of Russian consuls in Russian zone, Meliat due from Russians, Russian protected persons 9638¹⁾ from lands leased to or held by such persons is collected by Russian consuls and paid into Russian bank, on account of P. G., who has so far heard no more of those moneys since their collection. Russian Consul interferes largely in provincial administrations where lands held or leased by Russians and Russian protected persons are concerned.

* * *

¹⁾ This word the British consul was unable to decipher.

IV.

On the 16th of October 1910 England presented Persia with that memorable ultimatum which demanded in the first instance for the Southern trade-routes the training, arming and maintenance of a body of police under British command, unless the security of the trade-routes which were supposed to be endangered by tribal robbers could be restored within three months. The fact that the impotency of the Persian Government against these unruly tribes was a consequence of the Anglo-Russian policy of strangling was ignored as well as the circumstance that the gathering of the Anglo-Russian troops and their provoking attitude in Persia was the chief cause of the troubles, though Persia made just representations on the subject to England. England insisted on her demands that Persia must establish — in the so-called neutral zone — a body of Gendarmerie at her own expense, and she modified the ultimatum only in so far that she allowed officers of a smaller power to be engaged as instructors in the place of the British officers. Grey adduced as a reason for these incessant molestations of the Persian Government that he could no longer disregard the complaints of the Manchester merchants about the bad state and the insecurity of the Bushire — Shiraz — Ispahan-trade-route. These complaints were not founded on facts, as appears from the telegram of the English minister in Teheran Sir G. Barclay May 28th, 1911¹⁾ „On the Bushire-Isfahan road and I presume that complaints of Manchester firms refer particularly to this route — His Majesty's consular officers at Bushire and Shiraz report considerable improvement since last year. I can only suppose, therefore, that firms in question must be under misapprehension —. No robbery has been reported on the Bushire-Shiraz section for a considerable time, no robbery occasioning the loss of British goods has taken place since December last. This year the telegraph line

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 123.

was not damaged as is usual during the tribal migration which has taken place."

Italy who had in the first place been approached for instructors declined. Sweden who had assured herself of consent from all sides, sent a number of tried officers with Colonel Hjalmarson at their head, who was appointed chief of the Gendarmerie and who arrived at Teheran on August 15th, 1911.

Hjalmarson and his comrades (there were twenty of them in 1912) — set to work zealously. They succeeded within a comparatively short time in training the troops who not only gained the respect of the people but even won a certain popularity by intelligently turning local conditions to account. Young tribesmen, for instance, who took to highway robbery from want of work and poverty, were just as ready for employment in the road-police against payment of small wages. Contrary to the dissolute Cossack Brigade who requisitioned at every opportunity which offered and made itself guilty of other gross offences against property (quite apart from the fact that it took its orders from Tiflis and from the Russian legation in Teheran), the Gendarmerie had placed itself from the beginning on an exclusively Persian footing. Anyone who knows the Swedish army will understand that the Swedish officers who were employed and paid by the Persian Government did their very best to justify the confidence reposed in them if only because their failure might easily have cast a slur on the Swedish army.

And the work succeeds. The number of officers and men is being constantly increased; the sphere of activity becomes greater from month to month. A state of order reigns on the caravan-routes. England whose trade in the South of Persia profits not least by the re-establishment of security recognises unreservedly the efforts of the Swedes through the Teheran minister in January 1913: "They are all smart soldiers, keen on their work." And on the occasion of a parade in April 1913 in the presence of the young Shah the Gendarmerie is stormily acclaimed by all classes of the Persian people while on the previous day the Cossack Brigade had been received in

chilly silence ¹⁾. Persia which had been incessantly humiliated and misused by two European powers, sees a new hope arise — the nucleus of a reliable military troop which grows to be a support of the Government instead of giving way to marauding instincts and which balances the loss of the troop of Yeprim Khan, the vanquisher of the Ex-Shah and the defender of national liberty.

The financing of this Gendarmerie had been settled by the pressure of England in the following way: Their cost of maintenance was to be defrayed in the first instance out of the Persian loans at high interest. Grey had telegraphed on May 4th, 1911 ²⁾ to the English minister: "Urge Persian Government that proposed Gendarmerie for policing of roads should have the first call on the loan." England however cunningly arranged that a Gendarmerie account was opened with the so-called Imperial Bank of Persia, a purely British concern by whom all payments were made direct to the Gendarmerie under the control of the Belgian Treasurer General of Persia; that is to say the Persian Central Government and the Governor General of Fars were left out of account. The motives become apparent when it is realised that the English Ambassador, as well as his adviser for Fars, the British Consul Major O'Connor in Shiraz, stood in much closer relationship to the Treasurer General and his agent at Shiraz ³⁾ than to the manyheaded Persian Government which in the main was too intent upon furthering Persian interests.

The conditions however were steadily becoming more unsound, as Nasr-ul-Mulk, the Regent, steadfastly refused to take the reactionary Saad-ed-Dowleh (who was an unscrupulous promoter of the Anglo-Russian schemes for concessions) into the ministry. When Sir W. Townley in his circular complains

¹⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 237.

²⁾ English Blue Books Persia No. 3 1912, No. 98.

³⁾ This is also apparent from intercepted private letters, which the Comptroller of Customs of Shiraz, the Belgian Stas, wrote from London, when on leave, to the British Consul at Shiraz. The British Consul had provided Stas with letters of recommendation for London and had introduced him by these means into his own family.

about the general situation which prevents money being obtained for the Gendarmerie, this means merely that the usurious terms of the loans offered are too high for the Persian Government to accept. The Swedish officers, many of them men of private means, rightly think that the situation brought about by the Anglo-Russian pressure on Persia, degrades them to the role of mendicants, they threaten to resign, but they are quieted by their own Government and England's promise to put the finances of the Gendarmerie on a sound basis.

England had now arrived at the point for which she had been striving. Exactly like the Persian Government itself the Gendarmerie was stalled off with small advances (which were chargeable to the Persian budget). The preliminary conditions for making the Persian Government a dependent were obtained by undermining its authority quite systematically. The Swedes were intended to help English ends and were highly welcomed particularly as a counterpressure against the Cossack Brigade. In fact in St. Petersburg plans were discussed by England, the most powerful financiers of the Gendarmerie, for the entire elimination of the Brigade. The English minister informed the consular officials under his orders by a confidential circular dated March 1914 that: "His Majesty's Government are negotiating about the Gendarmerie at Petersburg with a view to their being employed throughout Persia" and in the same circular the dispatch of a body of 1200 gendarmes and the extension of their activity in Isfahan is referred to.

If the English diplomatists in Teheran had previously acknowledged the excellent work of the Swedes, the English Consul General at Isfahan, Grahame, gave them a brilliant testimonial on the occasion of a journey from Bushire to Isfahan, the most noteworthy passages of which may be quoted here. In a letter addressed by Grahame to the English minister and dated December 25th, 1914, he says: "It is scarcely too much to say that the Bushire-Shiraz-Isfahan road is now the Gendarmerie, so completely has that force overshadowed the road, absorbing or dissipating all other elements The feelings of the men towards their Swedish officers appeared to be universally good (Major Lundberg in the Kaseroon and

Captain Killander in the Abadeh district being apparently prime favorites) All along the line from Bushire to Isfahan absolute security appeared to prevail and all the local inhabitants whom I questioned as to the outcome of the Gendarmerie system spoke of it in the highest terms, contrasting the present conditions on the road with those which prevailed before the force was established and expressing their gratitude for the enormous amelioration effected by it. Of the courtesy and attention received by me personally from the Gendarmerie in the course of my recent journey I cannot speak too highly and other British travellers . . . have spoken to me in a similar sense."

These words of a Consul who had travelled extensively in Persia and the facts made apparent by them might have been sufficient for England, if she was serious in her efforts to restore order in the country. But it was British order that was wanted, not Persian order. The experience made with Shuster seemed about to be repeated: again an attempt at reorganisation pressed on Persia from selfish motives turned to the disadvantage of England in so far as the reorganizers would not allow themselves to be shifted about as pawns in the English policy of control but considered themselves as servants in Persia's interests.

Thus, in order to have a pretext for weakening this organisation whose popularity was steadily increasing, by keeping back the pay assured them by agreement, England had recourse to besmirching their conduct and calumnies of the Swedish officers found ready listeners. On the occasion of leaving his post Townley however said on April 7th, 1915: "I cannot . . . divest myself of a belief that the actions of the Swedes said to be hostile to us have been exaggerated and that too ready an ear has been lent to interested calumniators."

The transporting of munition in 1913 for the Gendarmerie from Bushire into the interior which was part of that forces duty, offered the sought-for opportunity. This munition had been ordered with the knowledge of England and had been waiting about a year in Bushire on account of uncertain means of transport. England having once before ordered back unlawfully 200 000 cartridges on the way from Mo-hammerah to Ahwaz, which munition had been intended for

Isfahan by the Persian Government, two Swedish officers, Lundberg and Pousette, who were entrusted with the transport of this new consignment, took some precautionary measures which England immediately interpreted as a suspicious or even hostile act. And this in spite of Major Pravitz, the chief of the regiment stationed at Shiraz, having made no secret of the reason of the dispatch of the two officers¹⁾. For the British Consul at Shiraz sent on Januar 6th, 1915, a telegram of the following tenor to Teheran and Bushire:

“Prodrome, Tehran²⁾ Knox, Bushire³⁾.”

“Major Pravitz informed me to-day that Captains Lundberg and Pousette who were to have left Shiraz to-morrow morning for Tehran, have now received instructions from Tehran to proceed to Bushire in order to bring up one million of cartridges and for other purposes. O'Connor.”

The “calumnies” (such is the expression used by the British minister himself) of the absolutely loyal Swedish officers are allowed to take effect as evidenced by the reply of the Resident of Bushire dated Januar 17th, 1915. Lt. Col. Knox cables to the British minister, to Basrah, Shiraz and Delhi (!):

Tel. S. D.

From Knox, Bushire 17. 1. 1915.

C. Shiraz Telegram Nr. 1 January 6th.

Lundberg left Bushire with 463 mules laden with ammunition on January 15th. He stopped a very short time

¹⁾ The reproach to the Swedish officers of “smuggling munition” is further refuted by a letter from the late Commandant of the Gendarmerie at Fars, Uggla; this letter was found in the British Consulate at Shiraz. This Swedish officer writes to Major O'Connor from Peking on April 18th 1915: „For the moment I can only give you my word of honour that I (and I am convinced, all my Swedish officers) never have done anything of the kind, never have tried to disturb the internal peace of Persia, nor acted against whomever be it England, Russia or Germany. Neither have we transported arms or ammunition except for the Gendarmerie. On the other hand we (or at least myself) have never been approached by any German with proposals of this nature.”

²⁾ Telegraphic code word during war time for the English legation, Teheran.

³⁾ Resident and Consul General for Bushire and the gulfports.

here and is reported to have conducted his operations with extraordinary secrecy which deceived nobody but produced various extravagant rumours of contemplated action by Swedes and by P. G.¹⁾ Latter's objective is sometimes Turks sometimes Russians while one rumour has it that Turks and Swedes inspired by Germans will turn against Persians. It adds that Hjalmarson is acting treacherously under order of Swedish government.

My Russian colleague has manifested keen interest in Swedish movements and frequently asks me for news on this subject.

Addressed Minister, repeated Basrah, Shiraz, India.

The offence of which the Swedish officers are accused, is quickly defined. It is the crime, unpardonable even in neutral countries, of sympathy with Germany or perhaps even a mutual understanding. As appears from the foregoing telegram, no hesitation is shown to impute a breach of neutrality to the Swedish Government although the officers on the active list had received orders of recall in consequence of the Swedish mobilisation. But there is still a hesitating doubt whether the elimination of the Swedish officers would not be too dearly bought by the chaos which their disappearance might create; in consequence of the excellent work of the Gendarmerie English commerce which had almost entirely vanished in the first six months of the war is again in a flourishing state ("business "evidently was not quite" as usual"). Indeed a possibility had been discovered of securing a respectable portion of the tea trade hitherto in the Russian ally's hands. The English minister cables on Jan. 23rd, 1915, to the Foreign Office in London:

"Even if Russian answer is not satisfactory it would appear to me desirable that we should endeavour to obtain consent of Swedish Govt. to leave Major Folke and Major Carlberg or Moeller here²⁾ in order that Isfahan—Bushire section of road may be suitably controlled. Other arrangements if necessary

¹⁾ Persian Government.

²⁾ The Swedish Government had recalled them.

can be made after war. Road is open now and custom authorities at Bushire report large increase in customs dues. All tea that used to come via north is now entering by south. Sugar is likely to follow if the embargo on export of commodity from India is raised. We may thus recover large proportion of our vanished trade if the security of the road can be maintained. This is I think assured if competent officers are in command at Isfahan Shiraz."

The old English game of intrigues now starts: There is an attempt to play off a seemingly more pliable officer against those of his comrades whom one cannot trust to carry out a policy entirely in the English interests. In a characteristic telegram from the British Consul at Shiraz to the British Resident in Bushire and to the Minister at Teheran the attitude is also touched upon of the highest official in the province, the Governor General Mukhber-es-Sultaneh, an attitude which explains the continued efforts to undermine his position:

January 31st, 1915.

"Principal offenders in matter of pro-German talk are Cpts. Lundberg and Killander¹⁾. Former has left Shiraz for Tehran, and latter has fallen foul of Major Pravitz and will also, I hope soon depart from Fars. G. G.²⁾ also is very pro-German and is source whence emanate many German and Turkish reports.

German and Turkish news reach Shiraz from Tehran by Persian wires and by post."

The wrath of the English fell upon the head of the Chief of Gendarmerie, General Hjalmarson. He became tired of the British-Belgian game of intrigue²⁾ by which his officers and men were kept without their pay for months, and one day ordered Major Pravitz without any more ado to get himself

¹⁾ They had been designated by Consul-General Grahame as the officers most popular with their men.

²⁾ The British Consul at Shiraz telegraphs on February 18th, 1915, to his Minister: "The men (the gendarmerie of Fars) have not been paid for two months and Pravitz fears a general break up.

paid by collecting taxes "eventually with the help of the financial agent". Pravitz thereupon seized 10 000 Tomans which were deposited with the Belgian customs agent in Abadeh and which were receipts of taxes out of which the expenses of the Gendarmerie were to be defrayed according to the British-Persian agreement. The English Minister was beside himself with rage at this proceeding, which was quite comprehensible on the part of these officers whose dignity was constantly being slighted. The deserving commander, a Swedish officer of the General staff who, two years earlier, was a „smart soldier“ became "a madman with an enfeebled brain". Sir Walter Townley telegraphs on Februar 13th, 1915, to Shiraz and Bushire:

„Hjalmarson seems to have lost his head and to be seeking to wreck his own work whilst doing as much harm generally as he can. We hope to get rid of him soon, but this must be done in such a way that he cannot call all Swedes to follow him.

„He has himself announced that Swedish Government has recalled all officers on active list. At the request of British and Russian Governments, Folke has been allowed to remain as Officer Commanding so it will be hard for Hjalmarson to hang on.

"Belgians are naturally up in arms and see a political design in General's madness. I doubt this although his enfeebled brain may well be spurred on to be troublesome by Turkish and German advisers."

It had been for some time the intention of the English Government to remove General Hjalmarson, as all the other reorganizers and politicians who had been working for the best interests of Persia had been removed. The American "Colonel" Merrill whom we shall get to know still better in the role of an indefatigable intriguer and talebearer, had reported confidentially to the British Consul at Shiraz on February 1st: "The quarrel at Kazvine between gendarmes and Russian troops was over the barracks of the gendarmerie

which the Russians wanted to occupy ... Hjalmarson sent an impudent letter a few days ago to Korostovetz, which Korostovetz showed to Townley wherein Hjalmarson said that unless the Russians wanted to cause a clash, they had better leave the gendarmes at Kazvine alone. Townley said to Korostovetz: "Do your best to get Hjalmarson out at once and I will give you my full support."

In March 1915 the Swedish officers on the active list who had been recalled by their government, had left Persia; only officers of the reserve remained behind. The high command was transferred to Colonel Edwall. The acknowledgment of his and his subordinates' work from their arch enemy, Merrill, who was incessantly striving for the Swedes' dismissal, weighs, therefore, all the heavier. "I must say", he writes on March 6th to the British Consul at Shiraz, "the Swede reserve officers seem to be doing well." Nevertheless, the old system of thumbscrews is also applied to them, particularly by the Belgian financial administrators, as they are suspected of being pro-German. Merrill reports on March 4th to Shiraz: "From confidential, and very reliable sources I learn that Heynsens, Treasurer-General, will do his best in the next few weeks to prevent the Swedes getting any money for the Gendarmerie so as to force all of the Swedes to go."

Although pro-German utterances by the Swedes were considered to be such grave charges that they gave rise to a busy exchange of cablegrams between Teheran and London, neither the Belgians nor the English could bring home to the Swedish officers disloyal actions. Again and again the alternative had to be faced, either to worry the Swedish officers, who were so popular with the Persians, into taking their departure or to revert to the former chaos, which would have handed over British commerce and probably all political advantages which England had gained in Southern Persia to Russia. The lesser evil was chosen, although with gnashing of teeth. Grey, the much travelled psychologist, hit upon a proposal which would have been fine had it been made to the grandees of Bukarest and Constanza, instead of Swedish subjects. He offered the Swedish officers money through his

diplomatic agent¹⁾ to entice them over to the English side. On March 3, 1915, the English Minister informed the consuls of Shiraz, Bushire and Bazrah of a telegram addressed by him to Grey, the contents of which were rather compromising:

" At the same time it has impressed on me that Swedes are not so generally pro-German as is supposed and one officer who has been accused of showing his bias called on me to-day to say that he is of French origin and has all his family ties in England and²⁾ called pro-German. All are probably anti-Russian.

It would appear to me a most unfavourable moment to change foreign officers for gendarmerie. British officers are probably not available and imposition of them on Persia at present moment would make a bad impression. Task is too big for an American officer.

I venture to deny suggestion that Swedes³⁾

 and won to my side by pecuniary assistance."

Grey's proposal is declined by the British Minister at Teheran after having also been declined by the Swedish officers. The British Consul at Shiraz, Major O'Connor, who according to the circular of Sir W. Townley does not fail to show his authority where necessary, the "strong man of Fars", resents particularly this view of Townley's as communicated to London: Task is too heavy for an American officer. For it is he who wants to put his own creature, the former Colonel of Police, Merrill, at the head of the Gendarmerie at Fars. Merrill had to leave his post as instructor of the police at Shiraz on the action of the Governor-General Mukhber-es-Sultaneh, one of the most capable of Persian statesmen and an irreproachable patriot (the British Minister when leaving his post calls him a pillar of the constitutional Government).

¹⁾ Edwall and Pousette received these offers, which were of course ignored by them.

²⁾ Words difficult to decipher in English original, but evident from context.

³⁾ Here the British Consul could not decipher a line in the Minister's communication.

The explanation of this animosity is given by this late employee of the Persian Government himself in a letter addressed to O'Connor, dated March 4, 1915. "I did my best to serve English interests in Fars." All levers were used by O'Connor to bring this servant of English interests in Persia to Shiraz.

"Your Min. and Churchill¹⁾ both told me that you²⁾ were constantly "hammering away" to have me returned to Fars. There is no doubt that your Min. is willing if he can find a way. Hope you will succeed in ousting the G. G.³⁾ soon."

(Letter from Merrill to the British Consul at Shiraz of July 8, 1915.)

Thus nothing remained for the "strong man" at Fars but to settle down to the idea of these uncomfortable Swedes who could not understand that England's welfare is identical with that of all the other nations. He telegraphs in a fit of bad temper on March 5, 1915, to his Minister: "I trust that if the Swedes are to remain it may be impressed upon officers in Fars that not only should they maintain attitude of strictest neutrality whatever their own individual sympathies may be but that it is their duty to discourage all pro-German and Turkish propaganda amongst their native officers and men and to take active steps to suppress agitators and to ensure preservation of order"

If anything could contribute to the elimination of the last spark of sympathy for England felt by the Gendarmerie, it was the treatment which the English diplomatists and their Belgian henchmen were meting out to that force in the following months. Merrill at Teheran registers these events gleefully in his letters to O'Connor.

April 14th, 1915. "The gendarmerie is five months behind in pay and the police 100 000 tomans behind in pay."

P. S. "Townley and Korostovetz have continued opposing each other up to the last minute except that they agreed on getting the Swedes out."

¹⁾ The Dragoman of the English Legation.

²⁾ O'Connor.

³⁾ Governor General.

May 31st, 1915. "Last night the Farman farmar Min. of the Interior told Mirzayantz, a prominent Armenian who is a friend of mine, that the Persian govt. was determined to send off the Swedes but were obliged to go slowly with the matter as the public were so overwhelmingly in favor of the Swedes."

July 8th, 1915. "The only reason he held on to them was because of their ability to control the Persian officers who were all pro-German. He said that Edwall was completely in the hands of the Germans and that he is "a most awful fool."

July 25th, 1915. "The gendarmes are having a hard time to exist at all. They are getting for all the gendarmes here from one to three hundred ts. a day (Fridays and Mondays excepted!!!). It is a slow process but they are slowly being strangled"

August 14th, 1915. "Last night Kerr¹⁾ said that they would "see the gendarmerie in buggary" before they would let them get a shie of English money"

And these subjects of a nation esteemed throughout the world, whose pay is retained by England's and Russia's Belgian creatures, who are vilified by English diplomatists, these Swedish officers are nevertheless expected to maintain loyal, that is to say, friendly feelings towards England!

But the measure of the insults they were subjected to is not yet full. In order to obtain new material for accusations, the British Consul at Shiraz obtains, on July 5th, 1915, extracts of the private accounts of the Swedish officers from the manager of the Imperial Bank at Shiraz, Ferguson. The manager computes contrary to all commercial usage "for private information and confidential use, if necessary", what private funds belonging to Swedish officers had passed through his hands.

On April 8th, the Commander of the Shiraz Regiment, Major Pravitz, addressed a letter of warning to the General Treasury at Shiraz in which he explains that the fact was well known to him that the Treasury was owing the money for the

1) Archibald Kerr, the English Secretary of Legation.

pay, although much had been spent lately for other purposes. "It must be well known to the Treasury, that the Gendarmerie was legally guaranteed the receipt of the money required by it *before* the police and other institutions were paid"

This letter concludes: "as however our financial position is becoming more difficult every day and although the Treasury will not do its duty in spite of everything to that part of the administration of our country which is called the gendarmerie, it will be my first duty to tell my subordinates, and the people whose security depends upon the gendarmerie, about the hostile attitude of the Treasury and in order to avoid misunderstandings to give them also the names of the persons who work against the Persian interests."

Pravitz, a level-headed officer, who had been called by the British Consul "a sensible man who confines himself to his work" was brought to this by the creatures of Belgium and Russia. The latter, who were in Persian service, drew their pay from Persia and had it attested in writing that they were working against the interests of Persia.

Indeed, the Treasury at Shiraz refused at last to receive calls from the officers about their backpay. When Captain Oertengren thereupon addressed violent reproaches to the Financial Comptroller at Shiraz, the British Consul at Shiraz demanded the recall of Oertengren in a letter flaming with indignation which culminated in an insult to the whole Swedish nation. The passage runs: "Captain Oertengren, who is an officer of an unusually inferior type even for a Swede. . . ."

This sad chapter of English chivalry towards a staff of deserving officers, whom the English minister would have been only too pleased to treat to a *kick* (Townley put it more delicately by using the expression a "coup de pied") as a recognition of their professional achievements, which had been appreciated by all Persians and even by the English, could not close more suitably than with the résumé of the English minister Sir Walter Townley on the occasion of his leaving his post in April 1915:

"The Swedes, probably because they are pro-German, have become the darlings of the Persian people and can do

no wrong. It would be very hard for any Cabinet to take strong action against them. All that can be hoped is that we may get them out through the Swedish Government, but that would be out of all Persia, and then the question arises would not the last state of that man be worse than the first? With the Swedes gone, and no one available to take their place troubles would soon break out again on the road. Well, I shall not be here to see what will happen, and as I could not imagine that *all* you gentlemen in the South¹⁾ would have cooked the charges against them, I had to lift up my voice at last in hostile language. The Belgians appear to be all going, at least all those in financial administration. The Swedes have had no small share in this result, which appears to me an unfortunate one at this moment of chaos when Persia, as usual, is sorely in need of financial assistance that no one can well give her unless sure that there is a financial administration capable and honest enough to handle the money²⁾. What a hopeless task it is indeed! Here have I been three years bolstering up and supporting against all sorts of antagonists, including my best friends, these two European administrations only to find myself during my last days here unable to keep one on its feet, and administering a coup de pied with all my force to the other. It seems to have been a sad waste of much time and energy to produce such a poor result. I cannot at the same time divest myself of a belief that the actions of the Swedes said to be hostile to us have been exaggerated, and that too ready an ear has been lent to interested calumniators. I fully realize all the mischief the Swedes have done by their open expressions of conviction that the Germans must win. This opinion coming from what are considered as impartial military critics has had a great influence on the unreasoning public opinion of Persia who has gladly accepted as an accomplished fact the total overthrow of the hated Russian."

* * *

¹⁾ The letter is addressed to the consul at Shiraz.

²⁾ This the English minister says after Russia and England had driven the capable administration of Shuster out of Persia.

V.

The American, Merrill, is the chronicler who recorded the intrigues and the state of feeling at Teheran during the first half of the year 1915. He had come to Persia with his greater compatriot, Shuster, and was the only American amongst the helpers of the late Treasurer-General who had not declared his solidarity with him after the presentation of the Russian ultimatum.

Shuster and his staff went; Merrill remained behind. The British Legation got him at once into the gendarmerie commanded by Hjalmarson, and in February 1913 he was proposed to Grey by Sir Walter Townley as Chief of the Police force of the Governor-General of Fars¹). An illustration of how this honest person, who was in the pay of Persia, went about his work is given in his own words: "I did my best to serve *English* interests in Fars."

Mukhber-es-Sultaneh, a statesman who had been educated in Germany and in whose honourability the English had great confidence, or they would not have advocated his appointment to the post of Governor General of Fars, one of great importance in their eyes, soon discovered that Merrill had been put to spy upon him. Merrill with his inferior mentality looked down with contempt on all Orientals. Already in September 1914 he was relieved of his post and went to Teheran where he plotted modes of destruction against the Governor General of Fars and the Swedish officers.

In Teheran he lived the life of a fortune hunter of the type, many and varied specimens of which are to be met with in Oriental capitals. He was charmed when he was asked to tea or dinner by the English minister and could snatch some information from his small talk; he conversed and dined with foreign ministers and secretaries of legation; he hobnobbed with the Persian Armenians, went to the receptions of Persian

¹) English Blue Books Persia No. 1 (1914) No. 2. „I have proposed Colonel Merrill, an American who remained behind when Shuster went."

grandees, such as the Russophile Farman Farma. He studied the newspapers and the state of public feeling; in brief, he sought for knowledge, but not only on his own behalf. Whatever came to his ears ("My sources of information are excellent", he writes on March 16, 1915) he reported red hot to the English Consul at Shiraz, Major O'Connor, for whom he tried occasionally to do a little business in motor cars as well. He was particularly delighted to have an occasional dig at Europeans who were not on friendly terms with O'Connor, for instance, Churchill for many years Dragoman of the English Legation. "Sir W. Townley does not trust Churchill quite, he has repeatedly shown dislike for you (O'Connor) and he receives bribes, as the Secretary of Legation, Kerr, knows", is one of his reports.

This eavesdropper of Teheran secrets was a welcome source of information for Major O'Connor. It is well known that the English Consuls in latitudes which were to be „peacefully penetrated" are generally of military rank. He learned from the American that the German wireless station was "still working successfully", that Persian popular sentiment always excited anew by arbitrary acts of England, such as the arrest of the German Consul Listemann at Bushire, was quite openly demanding an alliance with Turkey and that Russian forces were always ordered to march whenever a ministry tried to assert itself, which was disliked by Russia or England. He also heard that the British minister at Teheran "was going to make a big row" to have the Governor-General of Fars removed from office, and how badly the British and Russian ministers were getting on together.

Is Merrill only an idle gossip? The good fairies were indeed absent from the cradle of this adventurer. His witless cynicism, the cynicism of one of those unscrupulous profit hunters who have done so much to discredit the European-American race with the peoples of the Orient, has produced this grotesque passage in one of his letters: "I am afraid this policy of letting the Persians do as they please may cause them, like all Orientals, to mistake kindness for fear and proceed to take affairs in their own hands to the detriment of both Russia and England."

It is just the want of imagination of this American which is a guarantee of his correspondence reproducing the game

of intrigues at Teheran clearly and faithfully. The words attributed by him to foreign diplomatists, principally Townley, Marling and Korostovetz, have undoubtedly been spoken. On July 8, 1915 Merrill wrote to the British Consul at Shiraz and on May 17, 1915 the British Minister, Marling, to the same address:

Merrill to O'Connor:

"Your Min. Marling and Churchill both told me that you were constantly "hammering away" to have me returned to Fars"¹⁾.

Marling to O'Connor:

"We quite see that your Governor General has got to be got rid of, and I have been hammering at it since my arrival."

Much light is thrown on Townley's conflicts with his Russian colleague, Korostovetz, and on the policy prompted by jealousy between the two "Protecting Powers" who have struck their claws deep into the flesh of the defenceless Persian victim. This policy was continued even during the world-war. Korostovetz was like a red rag to a bull not only to Townley but also to his successor, Marling (who held Persia in greater contempt perhaps than any man whom Great Britain ever sent to Teheran on a diplomatic mission). "Korostovetz was a misfortune" Marling wrote on May 17th, 1915, to the British Consul at Shiraz, and he supplements his sharp criticism in a letter addressed to the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, Sir George Buchanan, dated June 20th, 1916, by these words: "As to Korostovetz, I'm sorry I cant share your belief in his sincerity I have no belief in Korostovetz. Everyone here describes him as impossible to get on with for long, the kind of man who acts out of "cussedness" and for the pleasure of doing what no one else would do. No one here seems to regret his departure, least of all his own Legation! He will not help us at the Russian Bank and his idea of co-operation between the Banque d'Escompte and the Imperial Bank of Persia will merely be that the latter should share its good business with the former, which if it were a private institution would have gone bankrupt years ago . . ."

¹⁾ The removal of the Governor General was the *conditio sine qua non* of Merrill's recall to Fars.

We will now let the American, Merrill, speak, whom England in 1916 entrusted with the organization of a force similar to the Cossack Brigade and who was soon after appointed Commander of the forces of Prince Nusrat-es-Sultaneh¹⁾:

Teheran, Jan. 20. 1915.

Dear Major:

To-day is the third day that the treasury has been closed here as a protest against the high handed proceedings of the gendarmerie in collecting taxes in the provinces. I understand that the Belgians say that either the Swedes go or they go: in all probability some of both sides will go: rather think the govt. is rather pleased at the situation as it gives them a chance to get rid of the detested Belgians. I believe the report is true that Hjalmarson has a signed contract in his pocket to organize a gendarmerie in China! poor China! The situation at Kerman Sir Walter told me was "rotten": the gendarmerie running wild in the streets: he said in all probability an independent force would have to be organized there: hinting I think that I might have it! The Birjand post is at my command if I want, but the situation is changing very rapidly and I am awaiting the adjustments sure to follow the departure of the Swedish regular army officers. Niström, Möller, Folke, Anden, Hjalmarson will go, leaving only reservist officers or militiamen. Poursette is I hear to be chief gendarmerie accountant here: ach Gretchen!! The air literally hums with intrigue now in Teheran. For a time there was a bit of an anti foreigner feeling visible but that has practically passed away: there is a small group at work to induce Persia to declare war against Turkey. Even among the Bakhtiariis, as I told Sir Walter, I have found German sympathizers: the cabinet is spineless, incompetent and helpless; the medjiless is yet occupied with passing on the credentials of its members; one rarely hears the parliament mentioned except contemptuously even by Persians²⁾.

¹⁾ Russkoje Slowo, April 9th, 1916

²⁾ The British minister characterizes the new Parliament with the words: "Democratic element is entirely eliminated." Compare also the passage already quoted from "The New Statesman", Jan. 1st, 1916: "The honestest side in Persian politics is the democratic one."

I am hoping Shiraz will be my command once more: I hope the report I put in about my stay at Shiraz will get the Moakber-es-saltaneh out of Fars; Sir Walter saw it as did Churchill. I left little untold; it went to the Ministry of War to-day; included in the report was a lot re Kazeroon except that I did not mention the Swedes anywhere in the report in connection with Kazeroon. Churchill through Persians has spread word all over Teheran that if the G. G. of Fars does not resign my report will be published in full in all of the seven Teheran newspapers and in the papers in England and Europe. Sir Walter has a (*confidential*) scheme to put me in charge of 500 Bakhtiari horsemen here at Teheran but although it is acceptable still I think it will only be a temporary command to be discharged once the need of them has passed

There has been a lot of "fuss" over Tabriz; the Persian govt. is making desperate efforts to get the Crown Prince started for there; they got together a ragged collection of *miscellaneous* soldiers that are a comic opera troupe and some thirty or forty thousand toman for expenses. The coming of the Turks to Tabriz has been welcomed by the Persians who say the Turks have delivered them from the Russians; the Persians believe the Turks will leave Persia when the Valiat arrives at Tabriz; a great part of the Valiats' escort will return to Teheran after he arrives safely at Tabriz.

The Russian Minister, Korostovetz, has been rather alarmed for his safety. He is said to have declared that if the Russian troops left Kazvine that he would not remain in Teheran but would go to Zergandeh in Shimran as being safer than the legation in town. A well informed Armenian told Sir Walter¹⁾ that *one* Russian defeat at the hands of the Turks would very likely precipitate Persia into the conflict on the side of Turkey.

I am trying to get Americans brought here for both the gendarmerie and Treasury. I have told Sir Walter that the Persians are decidedly in favor of such a plan but fear Russia's opposition.

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill

¹⁾ Probably Mirzayantz with whom Merrill as he says later on was on friendly terms.

Confidential.

Teheran, Feb. 1. 1915.

Dear Major:

A determined effort has been made to put me in as chief of the gendarmerie to succeed Hjalmarson, but Sir Walter has decided I think upon retaining Col. Folke, chief at present at Ispahan, as chief of the gendarmerie, assisted by Majors Moeller and Carlberg; all of the rest of the Swedes to go. As you have heard no doubt Townley and Korostovetz are ordered away: to replace the Russian Min. a mild little man will come from London...

The opinion of the Persians is that if Townley goes it means that England is turning Persia over to the tender mercies of the Russians. Borgrave¹⁾ and Lecomte²⁾ have wired their respective govts. saying that Sir Edward Grey should be informed that it is their opinion that if Townley leaves and his personal influence is removed that they believe that Persia will join with Turkey in the war..... If Townley remains I am sure that Korostovetz will remain too. A new cabinet is being formed. Current opinion is that it will very likely be a strong pro-Russian cabinet. In that case I do not believe a single Swede will be allowed to remain in Persia.....

The Russians re-entered Tabriz two days ago without opposition; both Townley and Churchill admit that there is a pro-German sentiment among the Bakhtiaris.....

My opinion is that if she dared Persia would join the Turks and if she does the Bakhtiaris and all other tribes will go along too.....

The Armenians want me to command a mixed force of 1000 cavalry (Bakhtiaris and Armenians) here at Teheran to be ready in case Russia should meet a defeat at the hands of Germany and Persia start to join Turkey....

Hjalmarson sent an impudent letter a few days ago to Korostovetz which Korostovetz showed to Townley wherein Hjalmarson said that unless the Russians wanted to cause a clash they had better leave the gendarmes at Kazvine alone.

¹⁾ The Belgian Minister.

²⁾ The French Minister formerly in Berlin, known through the Eulenburg case.

Townley said to Korostovetz "Do your best to get Hjalmarson out at once and I will give you my full support.".....

The trouble at Kazvine between gendarmes and Russian troops was over the barracks of the gendarmerie which the Russians wanted to occupy as they said they heard the Swedes were leaving..... The Kazvine gendarmes and police yesterday stopped work because of no funds....

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

Teheran, March 4. 1915.

P. S. *If the Swedes all go I will, I am sure, be the chief of the gendarmerie. I think that in the future the gendarmes will mainly be used on the Teheran—Bushire road. Russia does not want them in the north.*

Teheran, March, 4th, 1915.

Dear Major:

....For some reason unknown to me Sir Walter has endorsed the remaining of the Swedes in and at the head of the gendarmerie. Possibly he does not want to make any changes before his relief arrive. Would it be possible for Sir Walter (if you wrote to him explaining what happened at Shiraz) to speak privately to Heynsens, Treasurer General, and ask him to release¹⁾ me from responsibility for property at Shiraz? I did my best to serve English interests in Fars.....

..... The Austrian Min. Logatetti and Prince Reis, German Min. each accompanied by a military attaché are reported to be returning to Teheran via Kermanshah. If your fleet succeeds in taking Constantinople it will have a great moral effect here as undoubtedly the Persians are intensely pro German and pro Turkish From confidential and very reliable sources I learn that Heynsens, Treasurer General, will do his best in the next few weeks to prevent the Swedes getting any money for the gendarmerie so as to force all of the Swedes to go. All of the active officers (i. e. officers of the Swedish regular army) have now left Persia and Major Edouall who is in command is a great enemy of Heynsens. It is an

¹⁾ Merrill had been accused by the Belgian financial agent Stas in Shiraz, of having tampered with Persian Government property.

unconfirmed report that the Swedes now remaining have said that they will remain until the end of April and that they will then leave Persia if no better arrangements have been made by that time for supplying money for the gendarmerie. If Sweden should enter this war on the side of Germany of course all of the Swedes would be recalled from Persia. There has been some confidential talk of Russia and England supplying arms to Persia with which to fight Turkey. The cabinet is favorably disposed to the idea but are afraid I believe to accept the proposition because of what the mass of the people think and what they would say..... I am positive that the Russian Legation is entirely opposed to the present cabinet and that it is working for its overthrow

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

P. S. It is rumored in the diplomatic colony here that Churchill is to be shipped off to a consulate in Italy as he is not too well trusted by Sir Walter¹⁾.

Confidential.

Teheran, March 6. 1915.

Dear Major:

.... Two days ago the Prime Min. gave orders that no one should accept any checks signed by the Treasurer General (Heynsens) and the understanding is that the Min. of Finance will sign checks hereafter..... Sir Walter left Wednesday with Churchill for a place beyond Verramin to do some excavating²⁾. They will be away ten days. The day *after* they left the order was issued by the Prime Min. about the Treasurer Generals' signing checks..... Sir Walter said one day to Wad: "I wish there was a man in the Persian cabinet with force of character enough to kick out all the Swedes and Belgians and replace them by Americans." ... I must say the Swede reserve officers seem to be doing well. I have noticed already an improvement in the discipline of the gendarmes.... Sir Walter I hear has been trying to appease without success

¹⁾ Sir Walter Townley, the British Minister, Churchill's chief.

²⁾ Although France had secured the rights of excavating in Persia.

the dislike of the Russians for the present cabinet..... The two legations are now fighting each other at every point of contact.....

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

Teheran, March 16. 15.

Dear Major:

..... My sources of information are *excellent*. As I predicted the last cabinet did not last long. The present prime Min. is believed to be pro-Russian and the other Mins. are *not* anti-Russian..... Opinion is that the Russian Legation now is the controlling factor here. On excellent authority I have it that Russia effects to make a loan to Persia in a month or so and also to control the expenditures and the finances. At the time the loan is made a big effort will also be made to induce Persia to abandon her neutrality. Confidential opinion is that the Russians will not be able to accomplish this plan as although the cabinet may be willing nevertheless for fear of the Persian people no cabinet will dare to enter the war on the side of Russia..... Heynsens¹⁾ has distributed a lot of money I am told (I am inclined to believe it) among the members of the Medjiless to insure the Belgians remaining in office. I suspect the money is Russian. The Russians will do their best to oust all Swedes. The Persians hate the Belgians and will get them out if it is possible..... Teheran newspapers are very indignant at the capture of the German consul²⁾ by your forces at Bushire....

With best salaams

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

Dear Major:

Teheran, March 21. 1915.

This afternoon I was over at your legation for tea and also had a talk with Sir Walter. He said "I yesterday recommended to the Prime Minister that he take the Moakber-es-Saltaneh³⁾

¹⁾ The Treasurer General, a Belgian.

²⁾ Consul Listemann was illegally arrested and interned in India by the English.

³⁾ Governor General of Fars.

out of Shiraz and that the Swedes be recalled from Fars and that you be sent to command the gendarmerie there".

All Persia is seething. The situation as regards all of the tribes is *very critical*. Everywhere in the provinces the tribes are on the point of rising; east, north, south, west — all around. Teheran will probably be kept in hand by Russian troops. I believe it is true that 1400 Baghtiaries have joined the Turks. .

The Russians are still doing their utmost to oust the Swedes and prevent their getting any money Churchill¹⁾ is surely going to leave Persia. Good riddance. Zarimar!

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

P. S. Why not recommend that the Army of Fars be abolished and merged with the gendarmerie? We need the field guns. Also that I be given control of the police. That is important in these unsettled times in order to have a hand on the pulse of Shiraz. Please ask that I get something extra in pay on acct. of the police.

Teheran, March 26. 1915.

Dear Major:

Townley yesterday told me that Sir Edward Grey on March 24th asked Stockholm to recall the Swedes from Fars. Townley told me he believed he had succeeded yesterday in frightening the Persian government. He told the Persians that there was imminent danger that 10 000 Russian troops might occupy Teheran to enforce their demands as to Persia's neutrality. He said he had received yesterday a conciliatory reply from the Prime Minister. The Prime Min. said to Townley "Well, of course the Russians can send troops here and change the cabinet and put in whom they like as ministers but if they do all the tribes will rise and it will take 100 000 Russian troops to deal with the situation. Townley said he believed the Russians were taking advantage of the present situation and were pleased because it gave them a good excuse to bring in troops The present cabinet is showing a great deal of independence and disregard of *both* legations.

¹⁾ The dragoman of the English Legation.

Romero¹⁾ told me this morning that the Russians have presented a note to the Persian govt. demanding that Persia put 150 000 men in the field against Turkey. In return Russia will cancel Persia's debt to Russia and loan Persia more money. I am sure that the present cabinet will be afraid to accept this proposition. Three days ago one of the Teheran papers here contained an open appeal to the Persians to enter the war on the side of Turkey.

Townley said yesterday that your govt. was only worried about Persia's actions on the ground of the effect Persia's entry into the war might have on Afghanistan, that if Persia did go to war in all probability Russia would let things slide and would withdraw from Persia and that after the war both Russia and England would settle with Persia. That if Afghanistan revolted the Indian govt. planned to withdraw to the plains of India and there await and give battle to the Afghans and to also wait until the end of the war before invading and punishing Afghanistan. Townley said that the Baghtiari Khans had assured him that even if they received orders from the Persian govt. to fight against England and Russia that they would not obey. Townley is sceptical about this. I doubt very much if the Khans here could prevent their tribesmen from entering the war if it once started.

With best regards sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

Teheran, April 6. 1915.

Dear Major:

— I am afraid this policy of letting the Persians do as they please may cause them like all Orientals to mistake kindness for fear and proceed to take affairs in their own hands to the detriment of both Russia and England. . . . Teheran is outwardly quiet but inwardly there is a lot of unrest. Committees are scattered all over the city who are anxious to have Persia enter the war on the side of Turkey and the tone of the

¹⁾ De Romero Dusmet, Chargé d'affaires up to August 1913, then appointed Spanish Minister.

Persian newspapers is openly and frankly hostile to Russia.
The press says anything it pleases.

With best regards sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

Teheran, April 14. 1915.

Dear Major:

. Ramsden of your legation said to me that they think the Russians are trying to promote a scare in order to bring in troops. German opinion here is that the Russians will remain quiet allowing the Kurds to advance pillaging and murdering even up to Teheran when they will throw their troops in here and make an end of Persia. The gendarmerie is five months behind in pay and the police 100 000 tomans behind in pay.

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

P. S. Townley and Korostovetz have continued opposing each other up to the last minute except that they agreed on getting the Swedes out.

Teheran, May 31. 1915.

Dear Major:

. the cabinet seems disposed to do what they are told by the two legations. The 1500 veteran cossack troops with artillery and automobiles, said to include 2 armored cars, have arrived at Kazvine. These troops have recently been fighting on the Warsaw front. I was at dinner two nights ago at your legation. After dinner Churchill told me that "the Swedes are going and going very soon. Have patience. You will have work to do." Last night the Farman farman Min. of the Interior told Mirzayantz, a prominent Armenian who is a friend of mine, that the Persian govt. was determined to send off the Swedes but were obliged to go slowly with the matter as the public were so overwhelmingly in favor of the

Swedes. I was told last night by a Persian that the P. G. had recalled the Zil-es-sultan¹⁾ to be governor-general of Fars. . .

There are rather persistent rumors that the Germans intend to retire to Ispahan and fortify the place (how?) and that they hope the Swedes will join them. It is said that the Persian govt. may also withdraw there in case they refuse to abide by the wishes of the two legations. Both Marling²⁾ and Etter³⁾ with whom I am on the best of terms both tell me that they are confident and not worried over the German intrigues. Frankly I don't believe *either* of *them*. Personally I think they are both keeping quiet since the Russian troops have come to Kazvine and that they hope the Germans will start a row so that Russia can once for all seize North Persia. In that case the P. G. will go to Ispahan. I think the report above mentioned has something to do with this last possibility. It would not surprise me a bit if it develops that your govt. has already agreed to the partition of Persia, the removal of the P. G. to Ispahan and the giving of the control of all south of and including Ispahan (perhaps Hamadan and Kermanshah too) to your govt. but that your govt. has asked Russia to wait until a crisis occurs in north Persia before occupying the country. I believe that under present conditions the sooner

¹⁾ Eldest son of Shah Nasr-Eddin. He lived 10 years in exile in France. When attempting to return to Persia he was detained in Resht by the Persians and he was only allowed to go back to Europe on payment of a large sum. His recall took place of course owing to the pressure of Russia and England. The "Morning Post", May 26th, 1916, writes: The English Government; I learn, relies on his abilities as a ruler for restoring somewhat ordered conditions in the Southern sphere of English influence." On his return in May 1916 by way of London and St. Petersburg he was received by the king of England and the Czar. The Bakhtiars are his arch-enemies, as the assassination of the highest Khan is due to him. The English Minister Marling in a private letter writes on June 20th, 1916, in an ill-humoured way to Sir G. Buchanan, the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg: "I am not surprised to learn that the Zil retains his anti-Bakhtiari sentiments, but it is a bit of a shock that he should air them at Petrograd only ten days after protesting in London that he loved them as his children. I fear very much that we have to be prepared to see the Zil more friendly to the Russians than to us, but we must keep the pretence of seeing in him a "gros bonnet" enjoying and deserving equal favour from both Powers".

²⁾ Townley's successor.

³⁾ The new Russian Minister.

this happens the better. There seems to be no hope of a Lord Cromer appearing upon the scene to put this distracted land upon its feet.

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

Zarguendeh (Shimran), July 8. 1915.

Dear Major:

Yesterday morning I had a long talk with your Minister. He said nothing would please him more than to have me return to Shiraz; that it was possible that he could get the G. G. dismissed in the next two weeks; that the Ain-ed dowleh¹) was quite willing to do it, but every time he attempted it the G. G. got at the Shiraz deputies of the medjiless who aroused the Democrats and succeeded in blocking the work. The only reason he held on to them was because of their ability to control the Persian officers who were all pro-German. He said that Edouall was completely in the hands of the Germans and that he is "a most awful fool". He told me that Edwall takes his orders from the Moen-el-Vezareh²) whom the Minister characterized as "one of the most dangerous men in Persia, a rabid Democrat" and "a friend of the Germans". A short time ago your min. told me that he and the Russ. Min. were determined to get the Moen out of a place in the P. G. as soon as they could. Your Min. said that the P. G. does not seem to realize that they are almost on the verge of war with England.

Your Min. and Churchill both told me that you were constantly "hammering away" to have me returned to Fars. There is no doubt that your Min. is willing if he can find a way. Hope you will succeed in ousting the G. G. soon.

With best regards

yours sincerely

J. N. Merrill.

¹) Minister of the reactionary type. Shah Muzaffar-eddin was forced by the nation to dismiss him in 1906. Ain-ed-Dowleh was restored to influence after the elimination of the democrats and was Cabinet Minister at various times. The British Minister said of him in a confidential circular: "Ain-ed-Dowleh is held in office by us and will do anything for us."

²) Chief of the cabinet in the Foreign Office for some years.

Zarguendeh, July 25. 1915.

Dear Major:

..... I hear the cabinet will probably be determined upon in a few days but no one can tell for certain as all of the big Persians seem to be afraid to accept places on the cabinet....

Teheran is quiet. The gendarmes are having a hard time to exist at all. They are getting for all the gendarmes here from one to three hundred ts. a day (Fridays and Mondays excepted!!!). It is a slow process but they are slowly being strangled.

Lecomte tells me Rimbaud has gone with his regiment, *horses* and all to the Dardanelles and that he is most fortunate as his regiment is one of the very few using their horses as, as you know, the greater part of the cavalry are employed in trench warfare.

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill

Teheran, August 14. 1915.

Dear Major:

I saw Kerr¹⁾, the secretary of your legation last night, and he said that as soon as a cabinet is formed the very first demand to be made by your legation will be for the dismissal at once of the Moukber-es-saltaneh and that if the cabinet does not grant the demand that your legation intends "to make a great row" over it.

Last night Kerr said that they would now "see the gendarmerie in buggary" before they would let them get a shie of English money.

Since the fall of Warsaw the Persian papers have been very nasty. They are openly talking of concentrating all of their gendarmes at Teheran to resist the advance of a Russian force that might come from Kazvine. I have every reason to believe that the German wireless receiving station outside of Ispahan is still working successfully. ... Kerr told me that if an unsatisfactory cabinet was formed your legation and the Russian legation would break it up in a week Your lega-

¹⁾ Archibald Kerr, formerly in Rome and Berlin.

tion wants the Ain-ed-dowleh¹⁾ and Farman farmar²⁾ and the Russians would like to have the Saad-ed-dowleh³⁾ as prime minister New, director of Persian telegraphs told me confidentially that the reason 2000 Russian troops a few days ago marched eight farsaks out of Kazvine towards Teheran was because an adverse move was being made in the formation of the cabinet and the movement of the troops was a threat and so understood by the higher Persian officials. The move threw Teheran more or less into a panic

I told Kerr last night that I was very suspicious of the dealings of Churchill with the Persians in regard to the removal of the G. G. of Fars. Kerr said he knew Churchill got bribes. I suggested that the next time your legation tried to get the Moakber-es-saltaneh removed that they send a European but *not Churchill* to arrange the matter. I told Kerr also that Churchill has more than once shown to me his dislike for you and a disposition to excuse the doings of the G. G.

I am sending Kerr to-day my sixty two page report about my work in Fars so that he can get a better idea of the G. G. I do not mince words in the report . . .

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

Zarguendeh (Teheran), August 23. 1915.

Dear Major:

Last night I saw Kerr and he said that the prime minister had agreed to remove the G. G. It now remains to be seen if the prime minister will do as he promises or is strong enough to do it. Kerr says they want the Farman farmar as G. G. and that he is keen to go. The F. f. and I are good friends.

The situation in Teheran in the last few days has been changing for the worse. Large meetings in the mosques urging

¹⁾ Confirmed by Townley in his circular March 23rd, 1914: "Ain-ed-Dowleh is held in office by us and will do anything for us."

²⁾ Prince Farman Farma, reactionary, characterised by Shuster (Strangling of Persia, page 259).

³⁾ The ultra-reactionary Minister of the Ex-Shah, recalled from exile by Russia and England to Teheran. He was to have been forced on the Persian Ministry, but this did not succeed.

arming and resistance to the Russians—noisy crowds in front of the Medjiless howling for the assassinations of prominent pro Russian Persians.....

..... The German wireless receiving station is still working at Shulgistan not far from Ispahan. This is accurate information.

Sincerely yours

J. N. Merrill.

* * *

VI.

The aims of the English colonial policy in Asia, for the promotion of which Lord Curzon undertook his famous demonstrative cruise in the Persian Gulf in 1904, are given with striking terseness in Curzon's imperative "India must have the Euphrates as her boundary". The cordon drawn round India, the crown jewel, had been extended further. Having secured control of the Suez-Canal by the purchase of the majority of shares and having occupied Egypt, England established bases for her fleet at the entrance of the Red Sea. Steps were also taken to dominate the entrance of the Persian Gulf. Treaties were concluded with the heads of tribes of South and East Arabia for grants of territory and protectorates: the islands of Sokotra, Kuria-Muria and Mesirah were taken possession of by England; Bahrein, Oman and Hadramaut became English protectorates by treaty. At Koweit whose Sheikh, a vassal of England had been won over by England with money, arms, and the bait of a title, the British Consul raised the English flag at the entrance of the port and on two small islands lying just outside the harbour. In order to detach El-Ahsa from the Turkish Empire, England amply supported the Sheikh of the Wahabites with English gold ever since 1904.

In this way, secret treaties being also concluded with the Sheikh of Mohammerah, the Persian Gulf became a „mare clausum" and nothing was wanting in the fortification of the bulwarks erected westward of India but two coping stones: Mesopotamia and the securing of the Afghan-Indian Glacis, viz. Persia.

England did not allow the opportunity of the world-war to escape her; while the allied French and Russians were bleeding to death at the western and eastern fronts, she tried to realise the Curzon programme and to make Mesopotamia an "appendage of India".

England's insatiable greed for territory is again revealed by the perusal of a letter from one of the best known Oriental

politicians, Sir Valentine Chirol, which was written by him on the occasion of a voyage undertaken by the Viceroy of India¹⁾, and dated February 9th, 1915, on board the S. S. "Northbrook" in the Persian Gulf and addressed to the Consul at Shiraz: "Nothing was more remote from my thoughts than that I should be so soon travelling once more over these familiar waters with another Viceroy to carry a stage further towards the appointed goal the policy to which Curzon first gave definite shape and form when I was with him here eleven years ago. But what a crowd of difficult problems must arise out of every new development. We went up in the Lawrence²⁾ as far as Kurna and from the outposts saw the Turkish camp on the far horizon. They will doubtless soon be shifted out of that — though the floods are beginning to make operations equally difficult for both sides — but where are we ultimately to stop? It will be the problem of Persia over again, for even if we want to stop at...³⁾ what chance is there of being able to set up any permanent authority beyond our line? . . . We have every reason to congratulate ourselves on the good leadership and organisation—and the good luck—which have distinguished the Mesopotamian

1) The "Pioneer" makes the following observations on this voyage of the Viceroy: The Viceroy reached Koweit on January 31, where he received the British resident in the Persian Gulf, Sir Percy Scott, in private audience on board the S. S. "Northbrook". This audience was followed by a visit from Sheikh Tabir, the son of the Sheikh of Koweit, who appeared on behalf of his father and was accompanied by Col. Gray. Sheikh Abdullah Bin-Esa, son of the Sheikh of Bahrein, also came to a private audience at which Capt. Keyes, the political representative in Bahrein, was present. In the evening there was a little dinner party on board the "Northbrook". On February 1st, the official visit of the ruler of Koweit, Sheikh Sir Mubarak Bin Subah, and of Sheikh Abdullah Bin-Esa of Bahrein took place on which occasion the former was created Knight of the Star of India, and the latter received the cross of the Order of the Indian Empire. On February 3rd, the Viceroy went to the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab, inspected the works of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company situated on the island of Abadan, and then continued his voyage to Basrah. "The fact", adds this paper (on February 22nd, 1915), "that the Governor-General of India has visited Basrah, will not fail to make an impression on the feelings of the local Arab tribes who have so long been quarrelling with the Turks. A glance into the future shows us Basrah as the terminus of the Baghdad Railway, the completion of which is now no longer in German hands."

2) Steamboat.

3) The word omitted is difficult to read, perhaps Baghdad is meant.

expedition so far¹⁾ the exact antipodes of the E. African fiasco. Our troubles will, I fancy, begin with the climatic conditions during the hot weather and with the administrative questions which will have pretty soon to be faced, and though Mesopotamia must obviously be an Indian appendage, it would be, I think, a deplorable mistake to import hard and fast methods of Indian bureaucracy."

Persia is designated here also as the most difficult problem. Much indeed had been done for its solution. The finances of Iran had been ruined systematically, the most dangerous patriots had been driven into exile after years of English intrigue. Reactionary statesmen, obedient to English behests, were played off cleverly against ministers who outwardly appeared able and pliable, but who in reality were still too Persian. A high degree of skill had also been attained in turning tribal opposition to account. And yet the consciousness remained that Persia, more perhaps than even the Suez Canal, was one of the most vulnerable spots of the British world empire²⁾ which, if once set alight by the world-war, might easily spread its flames eastward to Afghanistan and India—"loyal" India.

Sir Walter Townley said on March 25th, 1915, to the American Colonel of gendarmerie, Merrill³⁾: "The British Government was only worried about Persia's action on the ground of the effect Persia's entry into the war might have on Afghanistan. That if Afghanistan revolted, the Indian Government planned to withdraw into the plains of India and there await and give battle to the Afghans."

The effect on India of an Afghan rising stands as a terrifying spectre before the eyes of the English diplomatists who

¹⁾ Written before the fall of Kut.

²⁾ To which decades ago, Sir W. Rawlinson (quoted by Lord Curzon in "Persia" I. page 612 as a "competent authority") had drawn warning attention. "The Persian", he says, "considered as a mere animal, is so very superior to any other Asiatic that it is impossible to avoid foreseeing that, as any European war becomes developed in the East, the military resources of Persia must be called into action. In fact it seems that we could not have a more formidable engine of attack and offence launched against India than a Persian army commanded by Russian officers."

³⁾ Who reports on this in a letter to the British Consul at Shiraz.

are so uncertain of that country that Indians with or without the English title of knighthood are incessantly induced by some bait or other to trumpet forth in pamphlets the loyalty of India to England. "Herein India", writes the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in India, A. H. Grant, on December 7th, 1914, from Delhi to the British Consul at Shiraz, "things are fairly quiet, though there is a good deal of smouldering Moslem feeling. — The Sikhs and seditionists are restless. The frontier is fairly quiet though (a second though) there has been an ebullition in the Tochi. If the Ameer can keep Afghanistan as a whole quiet all will be well. He is doing his best—but he is up against a good deal of hotheaded fanaticism and Turkish intrigue. Persian complications would be a great bore at this moment." —

The trouble was that England did not feel sure at any moment of her ally and neighbour. The treaty of 1907, it is true, had sharply defined the spheres of interest of the two protecting powers in Persia.

But this did not prevent the English, who were annoyed at Russia's having got the best of the bargain, from working underhand as much as possible against Russia's peaceful penetration of her zone. They employed means which, like a boomerang, rebounded on themselves, but this was because in their greed they went too far all round!

The removal of the Ex-shah, the institution of a constitutional regime, the support of the Bakhtiaris and of their Khans Samsam-es-Saltaneh and Sardar-i-Jang, the appointment of American financial organisers and Swedish instructors of Gendarmerie were well forged weapons not prepared, as so many Persians perhaps believed at first, for the benefit of the people of Iran, but directed against Russia. In his farewell letter to the British consul at Shiraz of April 7th, 1915, the English minister Sir Walter Townley avowed this quite frankly: "I felt sure that our friends on the banks of the Neva would get tired of somebody who would not sit down and see them quietly absorb all Persia. Azerbaijan was bad enough but not nearly sufficient for the Muscovite appetite, and after

having a good bite at Isfahan the scheme was in course of elaboration to lay hands on Fars through the same channel as they had tried to incorporate Isfahan in their sphere of complete control. The only thing to do to check them was to carry the war into their own stronghold, Azerbaijan, to make them hold their hand in the centre and south. *This I did to some purpose and got them much on the raw by showing up various of their scandals.* Two things they could not forgive 1) the appointment of Samsam¹⁾ to Isfahan which served to show up the hollowness of their position there. It will take them some time to reestablish it, though dear old Grahame²⁾ will help them all he can by his blunders. 2) The presence of the Imperial Bank in the Russian zone as the agency through which the revenues were transferred to Tehran. They won't shake loose from A. O. Wood³⁾ for some time."

England saw with ill-concealed anger that Russia was advancing her railway-system nearer and nearer to the North Persian frontier and when she obtained on February 5th, 1913, the railway concession for the Julfa—Tabriz—Urmia lake⁴⁾ Grey cabled angrily to the British minister at Teheran: "H. M. G. has learnt with great regret and surprise that the Persian Government did not accept their very moderate proposals for an option only⁵⁾ though granting the concession for the Julfa-Tabriz-Railway".

The correspondent of the Morning Post H. J. Whigmore in his book "The Persian Problem" which appeared in 1903 had slightly altered an expression of Curzon's and called any minister a traitor who would tolerate Russia's building a railway line from Teheran or any other port of Northern Persia to the Gulf or to the Indian Ocean. Russia had been coming considerably nearer to such a plan by the first railway line within Persia. This under current is plainly perceptible from the passage in which Townley announces the slow progress of the

¹⁾ Samsam-es-Sultaneh, Khan of the Bakhtiars.

²⁾ The English Consul General at Ispahan.

³⁾ The manager of the Imperial Bank at Teheran.

⁴⁾ The Julfa-Tabriz-Railway was opened in February 1916. A branch line leads to the Urmia lake. The railway serves today strategical purposes in the first place.

⁵⁾ For the Mohammerah-Khoremaabad railway planned by England.

railway negotiations in his confidential circular. "Trans-Persian railway scheme is causing difficulties and negotiations in London and Petersburg do not seem to lead to an agreement. Russia desires line to run from Kerman to Charhar but H. M. G. are opposed to terminus being east of Bender Abbas."

In the notorious Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907 England's duties towards Russia were sharply defined in the first paragraph: "Great Britain engages not to seek for herself and not to support in favour of British subjects or in favour of the subjects of third powers, any concessions of a political or commercial nature, such as concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, &c. — beyond a line starting from Kasr-i-Shirin, passing through Isfahan, Yezd, Kakhk, and ending at a point on the Persian frontier at the intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontiers, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar concessions in this region which are supported by the Russian Government. *It is understood that the above mentioned places are included in the region in which Great Britain engages not to seek the concessions referred to.*"

Isfahan was thus clearly designated as a Russian sphere of interest. England confirms expressly once more that Isfahan is in the Russian zone in an "aide-memoire" which the English Chargé d'Affaires O'Brien handed the Persian Government on October 7th, 1911¹).

The British commercial documents found in the Shiraz Consulate show how little England cared about the paragraphs of signed treaties — and particularly the treaty of 1907! — and how she took advantage of every opportunity to undermine the enterprise of the countries in peaceful competition with herself and specially of Russia.

A question of transport, solved in the interest of England, the fixing of maximum prices for the forwarding of goods by means of transport animals on the Bushire—Shiraz road, led in 1913 and 1914 to a long correspondence between Bushire—Shiraz—Teheran—Delhi and London. The disagreements between Bushire and Shiraz are answerable for the long memo-

¹) English Blue Books Persia No. 3 (1912) No. 18: "in view of the fact that this last town (Isfahan) is situated in the Russian sphere".

randums elaborated which all have one guiding motive: *the ousting of non-British commerce in Persia by England.*

It is Russian commerce mainly which England attacks with great vehemence. The commercial adviser of the Resident of Bushire has already in February 1912 elaborated a confidential memorandum for the Indian Government and the Foreign Office in London in which he urges a scheme for the transport of goods on the Bushire—Shiraz road, that is to say, in the neutral zone, as being the most useful for English interests.

It concludes with the words: "*Our chief aim must be to check as long as possible the conquest of the Isfahan market by Russian commerce.*" "H. M. minister at Teheran" it is further stated in a memorandum of the resident of Bushire of September 28th, 1913, to Grey "recently expressed the opinion that Russia's pretensions to a larger share of the neutral zone will become the greater according as Russian influence is given time to extend southwards". And immediately afterwards follows: "We are confronted with the proposition how to prevent a further increase of Russian trade in the Isfahan province and southwards and how to win back, if possible, what Russian trade has recently captured in that province."

In this *one* memorandum reference is made *no less than a dozen times* to the "Russian acts of transgression", to the "attack by Russian trade on Ispahan and her pressure southwards" to the necessity of "bringing Russian trade on a decline" "of checking its development" and "not only in the province of Ispahan in North Fars, but *elsewhere*¹⁾."

Jealous of every budding enterprise, especially of those behind which they suspect Russian or other capital, the English watched their development no matter whether they took place in the Russian or the neutral zone. Persian merchants for instance planned the foundation of a company which was to have constructed a railway between Shiraz and Bushire: "I have reason to think," the British consul at Shiraz telegraphs to the minister at Teheran" — "that the scheme was suggested by the German Consul during his stay here last summer.

¹⁾ "If then we are to prevent further increases of Russian trade in the Ispahan province and in northern Fars and *elsewhere*"

Idea would be that the Company should pose as Persian Company but that considerable portion of the capital should be raised in Germany. I scarcely think that the project can come to anything but it is worth watching."

In March 1913 mention is made in a memorandum from the British Residency Bushire to Grey of a plan of the Persian Postmaster General concerning the installation of an automobile service between Teheran and Shiraz. To this and other proposals for promoting British and putting obstacles in the way of non-British trade the Indian Government takes up an attitude which is apparent from their communication to the Foreign Office in London, the most important passages of which are as follows:—

Confidential.

India Office to Foreign Office

(9837)

India Office, March 4, 1914.

Sir

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th November last, enclosing copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire, covering a memorandum by his Commercial Adviser on the existing insufficiency of transport in Southern Persia and the means of improving it, and also your letters of the 22nd December, 1913, and 20th January, 1914, forwarding the comments respectively of the Board of Trade and His Majesty's Minister at Teheran on Mr. Chick's memorandum.

In reply I am to transmit, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a secret letter from the Government of India containing a statement of their views on the general position of British commerce in Southern Persia in relation to the extensionsouthwards of Russian trade influence.

The Marquess of Crewe concurs generally in the opinions held by the Government of India, and would invite special attention to the last three paragraphs of their letter.

I remain, &c.

(signed) T. W. Holderness.

From the enclosures referred to we emphasize the most important paragraphs (2, 5, 6 and 7).

Confidential.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

Delhi, January 22, 1914.

My Lord Marquess,

With reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 17th November, 1913, we have the honour to submit the following remarks in regard to the prospect of Russian trade competition in Southern Persia¹⁾

2. We entirely agree as to the desirability of taking all reasonable steps to facilitate and encourage trade from the south on the Bushire—Shiraz—Ispahan line, not only in the interests of Indian commerce, but *on political grounds, as a safeguard against the extension of Russian trade, and thereby of Russian influence from the north.*

5. We have fully considered the other measures that have from time to time been suggested for the encouragement of Indian trade on the Shiraz—Ispahan route, as, for instance, the grant of State aid to traders, the possibility of inducing the British India Steam Navigation and other steamer companies to lower their freight charges on Indian tea to Persia, and the establishment of a motor service on the road. But we cannot at present advocate any of these measures.

6. As regards the proposed Persian motor service from Tehran to Shiraz, to which Sir P. Cox²⁾ alludes, we trust that, if the scheme is likely to materialise, His Majesty's Government will do what may be possible to discourage it, or at any rate to press for similar action or concessions in directions in which our interest lies.

7. It is becoming increasingly evident, especially in view of the activity that Russia is now showing in regard to the construction of railway lines from the north, that the only really effective means of safeguarding and promoting British

¹⁾ The paragraphs begin with No. 2.

²⁾ The British Resident and Consul General of Bushire.

trade in Persia is the simultaneous construction of railway lines into Persia from the south coast.

We have, &c.

Hardinge of Penshurst

O'M Creagh

S. A. Imam

W. H. Clark

R. H. Craddock

W. S. Meyer.

This is the real aspect of the "peaceful competition" of the English, this is their respect for treaties!

After humiliating Persia politically and committing her to financial servitude, they frustrate every attempt to open up Persian roads for trading purposes, unless the result is beneficial exclusively to English capital. England's "cant" so clever at clothing even her robbing decrees in hypocritical parlance blinds the world to her insatiable greed and unscrupulousness, which have brought a nation, emerging to new life and prosperity, to the verge of ruin. —

The words of John Galsworthy addressed to England in 1912 pleading mercy for Persia have been all in vain!

Are we with panic so deep-rotted down

In self, that we can feel no longer shame

To league and steal a nation's hope of youth?

Oh Sirs! Is our star merely cynical?

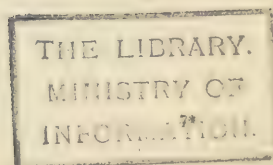
Is God reduced? That we must darken truth

And break our honour with this creeping fall?

*

*

*



Supplement

Facsimiles of important documents
quoted in the text

SHIRAZ.



Very Confidential.

Circular No.2.

Gulhek, June 26.1914.

Ref.my Confdl.Circular of March 23.

With the approach of the date of the Coronation the situation in the capital is very obscure. The Govt: is in sore financial difficulty and it is not apparent from what source money can be found. H.M.G. appears indisposed to give any assistance and the P.G. will not seek the help of Russia, because it is feared that assistance rendered from that quarter would be accompanied by demands for certain concessions, notably those of the navigation of Lake ~~Urumia~~ Urumia, the rectification of the Russo-Persian frontier in the neighbourhood of the Moghan Steppes,

Confidential circular from the English Minister in Teheran, Sir W. Townley,
to the consular Agents of Great Britain in Persia
Compare p. 51



together with certain irrigation works & a land concession, and the Karkunan irrigation scheme for diverting the waters of the ^KArun from a source near the Kuh-i-Rang into the Isfahan Plain.

The Cabinet is very disunited on the various questions, but more especially upon the method that should be adopted to protest against Russian action in the Province of Azerbaijan, where the G.G. under Russian protection, has made himself practically independent of the Tehran Government and where, under orders from St. Petersburg, the Russian Consulate General collects the land tax from Russian subjects, protected persons, and from Persians who have leased their lands to such persons. The same mode of collection has been put in force in other places in the Russian zone. Post Offices have also been opened by Russia at Tehran, Tabriz and, it is said, at Meshed.

Mr. J. Circular. D. G. 22nd Aug. 1904

22.

Very Confidential

My confidential circular of June

26th.

Activity of finance administration is hampered by action of Russian Consuls in Russian zone. Much due from Russians, Russian protected persons 9638 from lands bound to a bank by every person is collected by Russian Consuls & paid into Russian bank, on account of P.G., who has so far heard no more of these monies since this collection. Russian Consul interference largely in provincial administrations where lands held or leased by Russians & Russian protected persons are concerned.

Teheran

From Khush Bushire

D/L 17-1-18

OK

P.C. Shiraz Telegram No 1 Jan'y 6th.

Lundberg left Bushire with
400 & 13 mules laden with arms on
Jan'y 15th. He stopped a very
short time here & is reported to have
conducted his operation with extraordinary
secrecy which derived wholly from practical
various extravagant rumours of contemplation
action by Swedes & by P.G. latter's
objective is sometimes Turks sometimes
Persians while the rumour runs in that
Turks & Swedes inspired by Germans will
turn against Persians. So add that
Hickman is acting Frenchmen by under
orders of Swedish Government.

Telegram from the English Resident of Bushire, Consul General Knox, to the English Minister in Teheran, to the Consuls of Basrah and Shiraz and to the Indian Government. The telegram has been deciphered by the English Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor, and the text written by him

My Russian colleague has manifested keen interest in Swedish movements & frequently, asks me for news on this subject addressed Minister repeated Swedish Agency India

File 10 31-1-75

18) U.S. & Swedish

Proclamation June 12

Line 22.5

Principal offenders in matter of
pro. German. talk are Carl Lennberg
& Kellander. former has left Shiraz
for Iran & latter has fallen foul of
Major Prodigy - a man who is not to be
depended upon. Prodigy is a man
who compares himself to his work

Telegram from the Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor, to the English
Resident of Bushire, Knox, and the English Minister in Teheran.

O'Connor's handwriting

Compare p. 65

Full Rd.

From Turkey Plan

By 13-1-15

17 Similar incidents to one reported in No. 20 have occurred in north lately. Hjelmeran seems to have lost his head & is seeking to wreck his own work whilst doing as much harm generally as he can. We hope to get rid of him soon but this must be done in such a way that we cannot call all Swedes to follow him.

Belgians are naturally up in arms & see a political design in General's madness. I doubt this though his unfeeling brain may well be spurred on to be troublesome by Turkish & German advisers.

Colinward Shiraz reported
Rushie

Tel PD

From Trenchy Pm

Dh } 3-3-15

23. Substances of your tel 32 repeated
to Sir E. Grey with following addition

It would appear to me a most
unimprovable moment - to charge foreign
officers of sundanerie. British officers
are probably not available & imposition
of them on Persia at present moment
would make a bad impression. Task is too
big for an American officer.
I venture to deny suggestion that Sweden
is to be able to give any pecuniary assistance.

Private

5. July 1915

My dear O'Connor,

For your information private & confidential use if necessary from our books I find that Major Ravili has re-mitted one way & another during his stay in Shiraz for his private use the following sums.

Confidential

Shiraz.

My dear O'Connor

19th July 1915

The following are the figures of actual deposits made by the following Gendarmerie Officers with the Shiraz Branch of the Bank. Of course some were here comparatively a short time.

Yours sincerely
MacGregor

London Office
 Casp. Section.

To H. M. Minister
 Tehran

Casp. Section which
 is a most unusually inferior
 type, even for London

O'Connor

British Legation.

Tehran. 17 May 1915

My dear O'Connor, (may I drop out the Major?)

We continue that
your for: fer: has got to be got rid
of, & I have been hammering at
it since my arrival.

Yours very sincerely
C. M. Marling



June 20, 1916.

My dear Buchanan,

Many thanks for your letter of May 22
(received June 17), and enclosure of May 11.

I am not surprised to learn that the Zil retains his anti-Bakhtiari sentiments, but it is a bit of a shock that he should air them at Petrograd only ten days after protesting in London that he loved them as his children. I fear very much that we have to be prepared to see the Zil more friendly to the Russians than to us, but we must keep the pretence of seeing in him a "gros bonnet" enjoying and deserving equal favour from both Powers.

Sir G. Buchanan, G.C.B; G.C.M.G; G.C.V.O.

&c. &c. &c.

I have no belief in Korostovetz. Everyone here describes him as impossible to get on with for long, the kind of man who acts out of "cussedness" and for the pleasure of doing what no one else would do. I knew him in 1815 years ago, and have pleasant enough memories of him there, but no one here seems to regret his departure, least of all his own Legation! He will not help us at the Russian Bank, and his idea of cooperation between the Banque d'Escompte and the Imperial Bank of Persia will merely be that the latter should share its good business with the former, which if it were a private institution would have gone bankrupt years ago.

Yours very sincerely & truly.
 best regards to Lady Georgian

C. M. Maclure

Hjalmarsson sent an impudent letter a few days ago to Korostovetz which Korostovetz showed to Townley wherein Hjalmarsson said that unless the Russians wanted to cause a clash they had better leave the gendarmes at Kazvine alone: Townley said to Korostovetz "Do your best to get Hjalmarsson out at once and I will give you my full support."

and ^{6.}very reliable sources I learn that Hynsine, Treasurer General, will do his best in the next few weeks to prevent the Swedes getting any money for the gendarmerie so as to force all of the Swedes to go: all of the active

Townley said yesterday that
your govt. was only worried about
Persia's actions on the ground
of the effect Persia's entry into the

war might have ^{5,} on Afghanistan:
that if Persia did go to war in
all probability Russia would
let things slide, ^{and would withdraw from Persia} and that after
the war both Russia and England
would settle with Persia: that
if Afghanistan revolted the Indian
govt. planned to withdraw to
the plains of India and there
await and give battle to the Afghans

Sincerely yours,
J. N. Merrill.

I am afraid
 This policy of letting the Persians
 do as they please may cause them
 like all Orientals to mistake kind-
 ness for fear and proceed to take
 affairs in their own hands to
 the detriment of both Russia
 and England.

Teheran is quiet. The gendarmes
 are having a hard time to exist at all!
 They are getting for all the gendarmes
 here from one to three hundred
 a day (Fridays and Mondays
 excepted!!!) It is a slow process but
 they are slowly being strangled.

Last night Kerr said that they would now "see the gendarmes in huggary" ² before they would let them get a shie of English money.

I told Kerr last night that I was very suspicious of the dealings of Churchill with the Persians in regard to the removal of the G. G. of Fars: Kerr said he knew Churchill got bribes:

H.M.S. Northbrook
Persian Gulf.

VICEROY'S CAMP,
INDIA.
Febr. 9. 15

My dear O'Connor

VICEROY'S CAMP,

INDIA
- & the good luck - which have distinguished the Mesopotamian expedition so far - the exact anti-
podes of the E. African fiasco. Our troubles will I fancy begin with the climatic conditions during the hot weather & with the administrative questions which will have pretty soon to be faced. & though Mesopotamia must obviously be an Indian appendage, it would be I think, a deplorable mistake to import hard & fast methods of Indian bureaucracy. One point

Yrs sincerely Valentine Chirol



Private.

DELHI.

7. 12. 14.

My dear O'Connor

Many thanks for your letter
and most kind congratulations on my
acting appointment as Foreign Secretary. It

Here in India things are going quiet - though
there is a good deal of smoldering Moslem
feeling - and the Sikhs & revolutionists are
restless. The British are going quiet - though
there has been an eruption in the North.

The Amir has kept Afghanistan as a whole
quiet all will be well. He is doing his
best - but he is up against a good deal
of hot-headed fanaticism & Turkish intrigue.

Yours sincerely

A H Grant.

Private

British Legation.

Tehran.

April 7. 1915.

My dear O'Connor,

Well, my time in Persia is coming
 gradually to an end and in a little more than
 a week I turn my face homeward and the
 so-called land of the Rose will see me no
 more. I am going home on leave granted
 me in most encouraging language, but
 without my having asked for it, and because
 Korostovetz and I could not hit it off. Who
 could hit it off with poor old Korostovetz?
 Anyhow I am going and of course I have
 no intention of ever returning though I am
 nominally going on leave. I have been
 expecting this termination to my sojourn
 in Persia for some time, almost ever since
 I came here, because I felt sure that our
 friends on the banks of the Neva would get
 tired of somebody who would not sit down

and see them quietly absorb all Persia. Azerbaijan was bad enough but not nearly sufficient for the Muscovite appetite, and after having a good bite at Isfahan the scheme was in course of elaboration to lay hands on Fars through the same channel as they had tried to incorporate Isfahan in their sphere of complete control. The only thing to do to check them was to carry the war into their own stronghold, Azerbaijan, to make them hold their hand in the centre and south. This I did to some purpose and got them much on the raw by showing up various of their scandals. Two things they could not forgive, (1) the appointment of Samsam to Isfahan which served to show up the hollowness of their position there. It will take them some time to reestablish it, though dear old Grahame will help them all he can by his blunders. (2) The presence of the Imperial Bank in the Russian zone as the agency through which the revenues were transferred to Tehran. They won't shake

Original text of documents used

Confidential Circular of the English Minister in Teheran, Sir Walter Townley, to the Consular Representatives of Great Britain in Persia, dated March, 23rd, 1914 with enclosure. (Interview from "Raad.")

Circular No. I.

Tehran, 23rd, March 1914.

The following résumé of the political situation is being sent to British Consuls at Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz, Meshed, Kerman and Bushire for their very confidential information. A similar circular will be addressed to them, monthly if possible, though no definite period can as yet be fixed.

"Political situation is as follows: —

Persian affairs are giving rise to some awkward questions between Russia and England. Relations locally are not quite so united as in past. New Russian minister is somewhat peculiar in his attitude — see interview in the Persian newspaper copy of which is being sent to you. We support Ain-ed-Dowleh, gendarmerie, and the Bakhtiaris. Russians are now opposed to Ain-ed-Dowleh: talk of limiting the gendarmerie by keeping them out of the north and are becoming jealous of our friendliness with the Bakhtiaris. Ain-ed-Dowleh is held in office by us and will do anything for us. H. M. G. are negotiating about the Gendarmerie at Petersburg with a view to their being employed throughout Persia. Russia wants Cossack brigade to be increased so that they may take place of the gendarmerie in the north. Bakhtiaris are all well in hand. Their recent appointments to Isfahan and Kerman and the return of the Illkhani to his duties were brought about by this legation. Shaokats appointment to Seistan and Hashmat-ul-Mulk's arrest were arranged through Ain-ed-Dowleh's subserviency. Regents' main object is to crown Shah next July and to leave country. He feared that new Mejlis might vote postponement of the Shah's majority involving the Regent's resignation and

the election of a tool of their own: he therefore put off elections so that opening of the Mejlis might be as near coronation as possible: Tehran elections are now completed. Democratic element is entirely eliminated. Provincial elections will follow at once but Tabriz is almost certain to refuse to send deputies.

Position at Tabriz is most unsatisfactory owing to attitude of defiance and the independence of Shuja supported by Russia.

Persian Govt's financial difficulties are very great. Mor-nard is doing good work. It is hard to find money for the gendarmerie whose budget now amounts to about £ 600,000 per annum.

Trans-Persian railway scheme is causing difficulties, and negotiations in London and Petersburg do not seem to lead to an agreement. Russia desires line to run from Kerman to Charhar but H. M. G. are opposed to terminus being east of Bender Abbas.

P. G. can obtain £ 100,000 from a British syndicate for the Kerman mining concession 377 augmentation 3021 of private 8430 ¹⁾ by Russia acting on behalf of Société d'Etudes.

Gendarmerie have sent force of 1200 men to Burajird. Nizam-es-Saltaneh is to go there as Governor of Arabistan and Luristan.

Yezd is promised to Bakhtiaris in April.

Naib Hussein is getting anxious at Kashan owing to gradual closing in around him and is appealing to P. G. to be allowed to proceed to Kerbelah.

Gendarmerie have sent officer to Isfahan to prepare for extension there.

Fars' situation continues to give anxiety. B. C. ²⁾ does not hesitate to show his authority when necessary. G. G. ³⁾ has not proved success and a more pliable person is being sought. Present minister of Finance may be found most suitable person and his absence from the capital will strengthen Ained-Dowleh of whom he is an opponent. Recent affairs at Kazerun and the regrettable loss of a Swedish officer will not I

¹⁾ The British Consul in Shiraz could not quite decipher this passage.

²⁾ British Consul.

³⁾ Governor General.

hope have any far reaching results though trouble is not yet at an end.

There is some anxiety lest ex-Shah may return but the Russian Govt. have given most categorical assurances that he will not have Russian support. Salar also threatens to return.

Resumé of leading article in the journal "Raad" No. 41—34 of 10 March 1914 ¹).

It was the first time that a correspondent of a Persian paper presented himself in the Russian Legation before the minister to ask questions regarding the country. This interview lasted 1 hour and 10 minutes. The details are to be seen in this same page and one has to ponder over the points which the minister dealt with, which contains some truths which have been concealed from most of Persians up to now.

Though the behaviours of the former officials of the Russian Govt. did not coincide with the talk of the minister, but we hope that in future words and actions will correspond.

We are glad to hear from the tongue of the Russian Minister and the representative of his Majesty the Emperor of Russia that *it would be better that the Russian Govt. should expend 5 million roubles for progress and benefit of their own people and not for a detachment of their troops in a foreign country.*

Interview with M. Korostovetz, the Russian minister at Tehr.

In asking the opinion of the minister on the merits and characteristics of the Persians he said they were very kind, hospitable and pleasant, and contrary to his former belief they were not fanatic and had no anti-European feelings. But they were not industrious and naturally prefer idleness to activity.

The correspondent asked the minister to explain, if possible, the policy of the Russian Govt. to him which he said he could not do so, but he has been instructed to strengthen the friendly relations and cooperate in carrying out reforms. The correspondent asked him about the Russian military occupation

¹) This English translation of the interview was enclosed with the circular of the British Ambassador. We give the translation obviously done by a Persian, word for word.

of Northern Persia. The minister said that he was in favour of evacuation of Persian territories by Russian troops, and his Majesty has also instructed him to facilitate means of this purpose and the F. O. ¹⁾ has also instructed him to do so. The viceroy of Caucasia and the ex-prime minister who is the Minister of Finance joined him in that belief. *It would be better that the 5,000,000 roubles, which is spent on troops in Persia, should be spent on the progress and civilization of the country of Russia.*

He asked him about the ex-shah. The minister replied that he had lately gone to St. Petersburg and asked for assistance of the Russian Govt. to return to Persia, but he was replied that he had to leave the idea of returning to Persia entirely. The minister was sure that the Russian authorities won't support him at all.

The minister was asked if he thought Persian Constitution injurious to economical and political interests of Russia. He said that the two neighbouring powers had recognized the Persian constitution, therefore they had no opposition to it. But they were afraid the country would go into anarchy again. If the anarchy returns, the Russian authorities intend to modify the constitution and change the Parliamentary laws.

Regarding the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 the Russian minister said that the first aim of it was to preserve integrity of Persia. But as regards its future effects on Persia it was impossible to say and it was difficult to prophecy. The Persians had to put aside their personal interest and try for the country. He was sure that there were persons in Persia who were so competent that none could be found even in Russia. If Persians were helpless to administer their own country, ⁷/₈ of course natural proceedings would be unexpected.

The correspondent asked him about the Russian Govts' policy in the neutral zone, which he said they had no definite policy.

When he was asked about Persian Gendarmerie he replied that he had no opposition to it. But in the beginning it was said that the Gendarmerie was meant for roads only, but now the scheme is quite changed, and it is understood that the Gendar-

¹⁾ Foreign Office.

merie in future will take the place of a big force. Therefore it is necessary that he should enter into the question with the Persian, British and Swedish Govts.

As regards the big Persian loan, he said that its fulfillment depends on two points: —

1. that the budget should be regulated.
2. that the question of Railways shd. settled.

Regarding the Trans-Persian Railway he said that the British Govt. wants it to be constructed from northwestern parts to the south and the Persian Gulf, but the Russian Govt., should like it to be made from the north-west to the South-East.

Regarding Haji Shuja-ed-Dowleh and Azerbaijan, the minister said that it was Shuja-ed-Dowleh only who could restore orders in Tabriz and the province.

Confidential Circular of the English Minister in Teheran, Sir Walter Townley, to the Consular Representatives of Great Britain in Persia, dated June 26th, 1914.

Shiraz.

Official Stamp of the British Embassy.

Very Confidential

Circular Nr. 2.

Gulhek, June 26. 1914.

Ref. my Confdl. Circular of March 23.

With the approach of the date of the Coronation the situation in the capital is very obscure. The Govt: is in sore financial difficulty and it is not apparent from what source money can be found. H. M. G. appears indisposed to give any assistance and the P. G. will not seek the help of Russia, because it is feared that assistance rendered from that quarter would be accompanied by demands for certain concessions, notably those of the navigation of Lake Urumia, the rectification of the Russo—Persian frontier in the neighbourhood of the Moghan Steppes, together with certain irrigation works and a land concession, and the Karkunan irrigation scheme for diverting

the waters of the Karun from a source near the Kuh-i-Rang into the Isfahan Plain.

The Cabinet is very disunited on the various questions, but more especially upon the method that should be adopted to protest against Russian action in the Province of Azerbaijan, where the G. G. ¹⁾ under Russian protection, has made himself practically independent of the Tehran Government and where, under orders from St. Petersburg, the Russian Consulate General collects the land tax from Russian subjects, protected persons, and from Persians who have leased their lands to such persons. The same mode of collection has been put in force in other places in the Russian zone. Post Offices have also been opened by Russia at Tehran, Tabriz and, it is said, at Meshed.

Reports received from the provinces show that the elections are proceeding very slowly, and there would appear to be but small hope that the necessary quorum of the new Majliss will be present in Tehran in time for the Shah to take the constitutional oath before that body. It is therefore proposed to have recourse to a mixed assembly of the old and new Majliss for the purpose, a somewhat doubtful proceeding which may possibly give rise in the future to a question as to the validity of the Coronation. The Regent is, however, determined that the ceremony must not be postponed, and proposed to leave for Europe immediately after it. It is not clear who will form the first Cabinet of the new reign. The Russians strongly support Saad - ud - Dowleh, but there is reason to believe that the young Shah favours rather Mustofi-ul-Mamalek.

There is reason to believe that London and St. Petersburg are about to go thoroughly into the Persian question, with a view to seeing in what way it may be necessary to revise or qualify the understanding of 1907 in such a manner as to meet present requirements. The necessity for this action has been caused by the attitude lately assumed by Russia in N. Persia, and also partly perhaps by the fact that H. M. G., by the arrangement recently made with the A. P. O. C. ²⁾, has assumed certain fresh responsibilities in S. Persia which must be protected.

¹⁾ Governor General.

²⁾ Anglo-Persian-Oil-Company.

There are indications that some of the important tribes of the S. are seeking to band themselves together, presumably in anticipation of possible developments in the N. after the Coronation, which they fear may affect their interests adversely. There are also indications that certain of these tribes are desirous of entering upon closer relations with H. M. G.

Sd—W. Townley.

Confidential Circular of the English Minister in Teheran, Sir Walter Townley, to the Consular Representatives of Great Britain in Persia, dated August 22nd, 1914.

Nr. 3 Circular

Gulhek 22nd. Aug. 1914.

Very confidential

My confidential circular of June 26th.

Coronation passed off without any hitch and quite quietly. There not being a quorum of 70 of new Mejlis at Tehran, the oath of allegiance to constitution was taken before some 68 conjectural members of? (the query is O'Connors) old Mejlis under a perhaps somewhat strained interpretation of that clause of the constitution which says that in the event of demise of a sovereign whilst a Mejlis is not in being the oath should be taken before old Mejlis. Ceremonial observed on occasion of coronation was very simple. Innovation was a banquet which Shah gave to heads of foreign missions all of whom with the exception of Italian chargé d'affaires had special letters 6915. . . .¹⁾ ing them as special representatives of their respective sovereigns for occasion, and their wives. Vahliad and cabinet-ministers were present at banquet as also Shah's uncle, Prince Nusrat-es-Saltaneh. Ala-es-Saltaneh continued in office after coronation but resignation of M. F. A.²⁾, Vossuk-ed-Dowleh, became effective and there was complete stagnation decisive affairs.

¹⁾ not deciphered by O'Connor.

²⁾ Minister Foreign Affairs.

Cabinet was formed a few days ago by Mustafi-ul-Mamalik. Ala-es-Saltanah has assumed office of M. F. A. Prime Minister himself has taken over Home affairs. Remaining members of Cabinet are men of small importance. Muhtashem-es-Saltaneh is Minister of Finance, Sahab Ektiyar Minister of War, Zokar-el-Mulk Minister of Justice, Muhandes-el-Mamalik Minister of Commerce, and Shahab ed Dowleh Minister of Public Works, posts and telegraphs. In view of money stringency and situation created by Russia Prime minister was unable to secure cooperation of certain prominent politicians upon whom he had counted in accepting task of forming a cabinet.

Financial situation remains most critical. Treasury is entirely? (the query is O'Connors) depleted and it seems hard to imagine? whence? 8800 8158 ¹⁾ money can be found in present state of things in Europe. Swedish officers are making constant complaints that they cannot be held responsible for good behaviour of their men if they are not paid. They have threatened to seek permission of Swedish Govt. to withdraw if money is not forthcoming more regularly. Swedish Govt. having made an arrangement with H. M. G. that officers shall remain in Persia until next March has disapproved of minatory step taken but it is hard to see how service can be carried on if funds are not found. Arrangement made with H. M. G. is in sense that between now and next March some settlement will be made under which scope of action of gendarmerie will be satisfactorily determined with Russia and financial question established on a sound basis. H. M. G. have advanced £ 50,000 for use of gendarmerie in Fars and Kerman.

Activity of finance administration is hampered by action of Russian consuls in Russian zone, Meliat due from Russians, Russian protected persons 9638²⁾ from lands leased to or held by such persons is collected by Russian consuls and paid into Russian bank, on account of P. G., who has so far heard no more of those moneys since their collection. Russian Consul interferes largely in provincial administrations where lands held or leased by Russians and Russian protected persons are concerned.

¹⁾ ²⁾ not deciphered by O'Connor.

*Report of the English Consul General in Isfahan, G. Grahame,
to Sir Walter Townley, dated December 25th, 1914.*

Copy

Bushire-Shiras-Isfahan road
Gendarmerie

observations on

Isfahan, December 25th 1914.

Sir,

Having recently (viz. from November 27th to 18th instant) travelled by caravan over the Bushire-Shiras-Isfahan road — with which, or with some portions of which, I was fairly familiar during my term of office at Shiraz — I venture to think that my impressions of the present condition of that road as compared with its condition during the period 1903—08 may not be devoid of interest at this moment. I have accordingly the honour to submit some observations thereon.

It is scarcely too much to say that the Bushire-Shiras-Isfahan road is now the Gendarmerie, so completely has that force overshadowed the road, absorbing or dissipating all other elements. Here and there a few tufankjis linger on, survivals of the former régime, now mere dependents of the Gendarmerie and destined soon to disappear entirely. The local Khans have receded into the background and the local Deputy Governors have experienced a powerful check in their treatment of the inhabitants of their districts.

The Governor of the Gulf Ports replying to a notification of my intended departure from Bushire on the 27th ultimo informed the Acting British Resident at that place that arrangements would be made that I should be escorted by a gendarme from post to post all the way from Bushire to Shiras. Except on one stage this order was faithfully carried out. The escorting gendarme or gendarmes (for often more than one accompanied me) were sometimes mounted and sometimes, viz. on the kotals, on foot. On nearing the post where they were to be relieved these gendarmes would generally ask permission to go on ahead of me to warn their reliefs to be ready. There was no delay at any post and at none was any attempt direct or indirect made

to extort a gratuity. On one occasion when I offered one it was refused.

In most cases I questioned the gendarmes escorting me about their age, birthplace, time of service in the Gendarmerie etc. etc. etc., thus eliciting some expression of their feelings towards their Corps. In other cases I overheard scraps of conversation between them in Tourki (a majority of the gendarmes in Fars appear to be natives of Aserbaijan or Fars tribesmen speaking Tourki) a language which they could not suspect me of understanding.

There were many complaints more particularly south of Shiras e. g. about clothing overdue, about not being dismissed at the end of their contracts, about favouritism in promotion, about arrears of pay — these last chiefly in the tract between Bushire and Kazeroon where some of the men averred that they had not been paid for three months. The feeling of the men towards their Swedish officers appeared to be universally good (Major Lundberg in the Kaseroon and Captain Xillander in the Abadeh district being apparently prime favourites) . . .

The organization of the Corps in Fars territory appeared to be very complete. The gendarmes, who at almost every post turned out to salute as I passed, and those whom I came across along the road, presented a very purposelike appearance if not up to our idea of smartness. In some cases e. g. at Burji-Vizhdaneh and Yezdikhast I was invited to inspect the posts or quarters. The standard of order and neatness afforded a pleasing contrast to the usual Persian neglect and laissez-aller; the arrangements for the officers and men appeared to be good, the stabling for the horses much the reverse, the stables in some cases being built and maintained on the usual Persian principle of excluding all light and air in order to secure a high degree of warmth in cold weather.

All along the line from Bushire to Isfahan absolute security appeared to prevail and all the local inhabitants whom I questioned as to the outcome of the Gendarmerie system spoke of it in the highest terms, contrasting the present conditions on the road with those which prevailed before the force was established and expressing their gratitude for the enormous amelioration effected by it.

I was assured that robberies had practically ceased entirely within the field of operations of the Gendarmerie.

Of the courtesy and attention received by me personally from the Gendarmerie (more particularly from Captain Xillander at Abadeh) in the course of my recent journey I cannot speak too highly, and other British travellers who traversed the road about the same time as myself have spoken to me in a similar sense. I took an early opportunity of expressing to Captain Xillander (now at Isfahan) my appreciation of the services of the Gendarmerie, but I venture to suggest that — if you think fit — my thanks might also be transmitted to General Hjalmarson.

I have the honour to be,
Sir, Your Excellency's most obedient,
humble servant
Sd. G. Grahame.

H. E. Sir W. Townley, K. C. M. G.
etc. etc. etc.

Telegram from the English Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor, to the English Minister in Teheran. January 6th, 1915.

Tel. S. D.

1. Prodrôme, Tehran ¹⁾
2. Knox, Bushire.

6. 1. 1914 (mistake of O'Connors, should be 1915).

Major Pravitz informed me to-day that Captains Lundberg and Pousette who were to have left Shiraz to-morrow morning for Tehran have now received instructions from Tehran to proceed to Bushire in order to bring up one million of cartridges and for other purposes.

Addressed Tehran 4, repeated Bushire 1
O'Connor.

¹⁾ Address for war telegrams of the British Embassy, Teheran.

Telegram from the British Resident of Bushire, Consul General Knox, to the English Minister in Teheran. January 17th, 1915.

Tel. S. D.

From Knox, Bushire 17. 1. 1915.

C. Shiraz Telegram Nr. 1 January 6th.

Lundberg left Bushire with 463 mules laden with ammunition on January 15th. He stopped a very short time here and is reported to have conducted his operations with extraordinary secrecy which deceived nobody but produced various extravagant rumours of contemplated action by Swedes and by P. G.¹⁾ Latter's objective is sometimes Turks sometimes Russians while one rumour has it that Turks and Swedes inspired by Germans will turn against Persians. It adds that Hjalmarson is acting treacherously under order of Swedish government.

My Russian colleague has manifested keen interest in Swedish movements and frequently asks me for news on this subject.

Addressed Minister, repeated Basrah, Shiraz, India.

Telegram from the English Minister in Teheran to the Foreign Office in London. January 31st, 1915.

Tel. S. D.

from Townley, Tehran.

23. 1. 1915.

Your telegram etc.

Even if Russian answer is not satisfactory it would appear to me desirable that we should endeavour to obtain consent of Swedish Govt. to leave Major Folke and Major Carlberg or Moeller here in order that Isfahan—Bushire section of road may be suitably controlled. Other arrangements if necessary

¹⁾ Persian Government.

can be made after war. Road is open now and custom authorities at Bushire report large increase in customs dues. All tea that used to come via north is now entering by south. Sugar is likely to follow if the embargo on export of commodity from India is raised. We may thus recover large proportion of our vanished trade if the security of the road can be maintained. This is I think assured if competent officers are in command at Isfahan Shiraz.

Addressed F. O.¹⁾

Telegram from the English Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor, to the English Resident of Bushire and to the English Minister in Teheran. January 31st, 1915.

Tel. S. D.

31. I. 15.

to 1. Knox, Bushire 8

2. Prodrome, Tehran 12.

Your telegram 22. c.

Principal offenders in matter of pro-German talk are Capts. Lundberg and Killander. Former has left Shiraz for Tehran and latter has fallen foul of Major Pravitz and will also I hope soon depart from Fars. Pravitz is sensible man who confines himself to his work. I have represented to him necessity for Swedes to preserve strictly neutral attitude and he quite agrees. G. G. ²⁾ also is very pro-German and is source whence emanate many German and Turkish reports.

German and Turkish news reach Shiraz from Tehran by Persian wires and by post.

Addressed Bushire 8 repeated Tehran 12.

O'Connor.

¹⁾ Foreign Office. A copy of the telegram was sent to the British Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor.

²⁾ Governor General.

Telegram from the English Minister in Teheran to the English Consul in Shiraz and to the English Resident in Bushire. February 13th, 1915.

Tel. S. D.

From Townley, Tehran.

13. 2. 1915.

Similar incidents to one reported in your tel. 20 have occurred in north lately. Hjalmarson seems to have lost his head and to be seeking to wreck his own work whilst doing as much harm generally as he can. We hope to get rid of him soon but this must be done in such a way that he cannot call all Swedes to follow him.

He has himself announced that Swedish Govt. has recalled all officers on active list. At the request of British and Russian Govt. Folke has been allowed to remain as O. C. ¹⁾ so it will be hard for Hjalmarson to hang on.

Belgians are naturally up in arms and see a political design in General's madness. I doubt this though his enfeebled brain may well be spurred on to be troublesome by Turkish and German advisers.

Addressed Shiraz.

Repeated Bushire.

Telegram from the English Minister in Teheran to the Consuls in Shiraz, Bushire and Basrah. March 3rd, 1915.

Tel. S. D.

From Townley, Tehran

3. 3. 15.

23. Substance of your tel 32 repeated to Sir E. Grey, see file No. 13, with following addition which begins with a reference to last paragraph of your telegram. Begins:

This has already been done and assurance received that Swedish officers will be named. At the same time it has im-

¹⁾ Officer Commanding.

pressed on me that Swedes are not so generally pro-German as is supposed and one officer who has been accused of showing his bias called on me to-day to say that he is of French origin and has all his family ties in England and¹⁾ called pro-German. All are probably anti-Russian.

It would appear to me a most unfavourable moment to change foreign officers for gendarmerie. British officers are probably not available and imposition of them on Persia at present moment would make a bad impression. Task is too big for an American officer.

.
I venture to deny suggestion that Swedes²⁾ and won to my side by pecuniary assistance. Distribution of money could be made through legation and consuls as before.

Addressed Shiraz repeated Bushire and Basrah.

Telegram from the English Consul in Shiraz to the English Minister in Teheran. March 5th, 1915.

Tel. S. D.

To Prodrôme. Thr.

5. 3. 15.

Knox, Bushire.

Your tel. 23.

I fully realise that moment is inopportune for change in foreign officers of gendarmerie but I trust that if the Swedes are to remain it may be impressed upon officers in Fars that not only should they maintain attitude of strictest neutrality whatever their own individual sympathies may be but that it is their duty to discourage all pro-German and Turkish propaganda amongst their native officers and men and to take active steps to suppress agitators and to ensure preservation of order.

As regards future financial support I venture to express entire agreement with Y. E's view. Whoever the foreign offi-

¹⁾ Word illegible.

²⁾ not deciphered by O'Connor.

cers may be, we cannot afford to let the Gendarmery go to pieces through want of money and besides provision of funds gives us certain standing in all questions connected with the force....

Addressed Tehran 38 repeated Bushire 26

O'Connor.

Letter from the English Minister, Sir Walter Townley, to the Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor. April 7th, 1915.

Private

British Legation
Tehran
April 7. 1915.

My dear O'Connor,

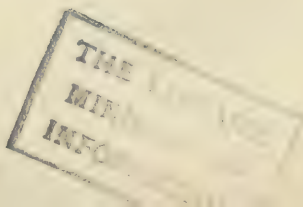
Well, my time in Persia is coming rapidly to an end and in a little more than a week I turn my face homeward and the so-called land of the Rose will see me no more. I am going home on leave granted me in most encouraging language, *but* without my having asked for it, and because Korostovetz and I could not hit it off. Who could hit it off with poor old Korostovetz? Anyhow I am going and of course I have no intention of ever returning though I am nominally going on leave. I have been expecting this termination to my sojourn in Persia for some time, almost ever since I am here, because I felt sure that our friends on the banks of the Neva would get tired of somebody who would not sit down and see them quietly absorb all Persia. Azerbaijan was bad enough but not nearly sufficient for the Muscovite appetite, and after having a good bite at Isfahan the scheme was in course of elaboration to lay hands on Fars through the same channel as they had tried to incorporate Isfahan in their sphere of complete control. The only thing to do to check them was to carry the war into their own stronghold, Azerbaijan, to make them hold their hand in the centre and south. This I did to some purpose and got them much on the raw by showing

up various of their scandals. Two things they could not forgive
 1) the appointment of Samsam to Isfahan which served to show up the hollowness of their position there. It will take them some time to reestablish it, though dear old Grahame will help them all he can by his blunders. 2) The presence of the Imperial Bank in the Russian zone as the agency through which the revenues were transferred to Tehran. They won't shake loose from A. O. Wood for some time. Then came the war, and their opportunity to represent that at such a parlous time the two Legations must be in closer touch than is possible as long as Korostovetz and I both remained. So we both go. As a matter of fact we have been on close and cordial terms ever since the war started, whatever may have been the situation previously. Of course as soon as it was known that I was to go the Persian public tumbled to the right conclusion that I had been sacrificed to Russia, but as it was clear that I had lost confidence of my government of course my influence disappeared. The war has served to show the deep hatred of all classes for Russia: as the latter's ally we have come in for a good deal of the same.....

I have spoken openly once or twice to Mushir-ed-Dowleh, and I think that I have now frightened him by the thought that Persia may forfeit the sympathy of her British friends, if she does not mend her ways. He has become much more amenable and has done several things I asked him to do, if he wished the 1) check the growing belief that the government were not sincere in their assurance. He is afraid to recall Mukhber who has many friends here, and who is looked upon as a pillar of constitutionalism ... His task is by no means an easy one as he has to govern with the Majliss which is so far under his brother's control, but as you know a Persian majliss is a fickle body and he may any day find a strong opposition against him.

The Swedes, probably because they are pro-German, have become the darlings of the Persian people and can do no wrong. It would be very hard for any Cabinet to take strong action against them. All that can be hoped is that we may

1) Mistake in writing.



get them out through the Swedish Government, but that would be out of all Persia, and then the question arises would not the last state of that man¹⁾ be worse than the first? With the Swedes gone, and no one available to take their place troubles would soon break out again on the road. Well, I shall not be here to see what will happen, and as I could not imagine that *all* you gentlemen in the South would have cooked the charges against them, I had to lift up my voice at last in hostile language. The Belgians appear to be all going, at least all those in financial administration. The Swedes have had no small share in this result, which appears to me an unfortunate one at this moment of chaos when Persia, as usual, is sorely in need of financial assistance that no one can well give her unless sure that there is a financial administration capable and honest enough to handle the money. What a hopeless task it is indeed! Here have I been three years bolstering up and supporting against all sorts of antagonists, including my best friends, these two European administrations only to find myself during my last days here unable to keep one on its feet, and administering a coup de pied with all my force to the other. It seems to have been a sad waste of much time and energy to produce such a poor result. I cannot at the same time divest myself of a belief that the actions of the Swedes said to be hostile to us have been exaggerated, and that too ready an ear has been lent to interested calumniators. I fully realize all the mischief the Swedes have done by their open expressions of conviction that the Germans must win. This opinion coming from what are considered as impartial military critics has had a great influence on the unreasoning public opinion of Persia who has gladly accepted as an accomplished fact the total overthrow of the hated Russian, without realizing that if beaten Russia would probably repay herself at the expense of Persia for any loss of territory she might suffer. I must now stop with my very best thanks for all your loyal cooperation, and much hoping to meet you ere long in England or at least in Europe.

Yours very sincerely

Walter Townley.

¹⁾ Mistake in writing.

The English Minister in Teheran, C. M. Marling, to the English Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor. May 17th, 1915.

British Legation.

Tehran, 17. May 1915.

My dear O'Connor, (may I drop out the Major?)

Many thanks for your letter. Yes I quite well remember that you were at Constantinople on the way out to this rather hectic country, and it was a pleasure to get your lines.

Tho' I think we understand the situation at Shiraz fairly well in its main features, a private letter always tells one something, or corrects an impression. We quite see that your Gov. Gen. has got to be got rid of, and I have been hammering at it since my arrival. With the late Cabinet it was useless, and as I feel fairly confident that the present ministers mean to see that Persia does not get hustled into a war that doesn't concern her, I have not cared to urge them too much, which indeed I don't think their position would make it prudent to do, but have preferred to leave Ain ed D.¹⁾ to bring it about his own way. I wish it could be done quicker for I realise that your position is not precisely comfortable

Is there any chance of your coming this way this summer. Gulahek is cool and we could find you a crib somehow, tho' we fill the house pretty full.

Yours very sincerely

C. M. Marling.

The English Minister in Teheran, C. M. Marling, to the English Ambassador in St. Petersburg, Sir G. Buchanan, June 20th, 1916.

Stamped:

British Legation, Tehran.

June, 20. 1916.

My dear Buchanan,

Many thanks for your letter of May 22 (received June 17) and enclosure of May 11.

¹⁾ Ain-ed-Dowleh.

I am not surprised to learn that the Zil retains his anti-Bakhtiari sentiments, but it is a bit of a shock that he should air them at Petrograd only ten days after protesting in London that he loved them as his children. I fear very much that we have to be prepared to see the Zil more friendly to the Russians than to us, but we must keep the pretence of seeing in him a „gros bonnet” enjoying and deserving equal favour from both Powers.

As to Korostovetz, I'm sorry I cant share your belief in his sincerity ...

I have no belief in Korostovetz. Everyone here describes him as impossible to get on with for long, the kind of man who acts out of “cussedness” and for the pleasure of doing what no one else would do. I knew him in Rio years ago, and have pleasant enough memories of him there, but no one here seems to regret his departure, least of all his own Legation! He will not help us at the Russian Bank, and his idea of cooperation between the Banque d'Escompte and the Imperial Bank of Persia will merely be that the latter should share its good business with the former, which if it were a private institution would have gone bankrupt years ago ...

Yours very sincerely and with best regards to Lady Georgina.

C. M. Marling.

Envelope:

On His Majesty's Service

Private

His Excellency

Sir George Buchanan G. C. B; G. C. V. O; G. C. M. S.

Petrograd.

Letter from Sir Valentine Chirol to the British Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor, 9th February 1915.

H. M. S. Northbrook
Persian Gulf.

Viceroy's Camp, India, Febr. 9. 15.

My dear O'Connor.

This morning we could just see in the dim distance the outline of the Koh-tals above Bushire and I thought of you sitting I fear rather disconsolate in your lonely outpost with nothing much to do but to keep things going and watch and wait until Armageddon decides the fate of Fars and Iran together with that of many mightier empires. It is a wonderful time to have lived through, even as a mere spectator, though one cannot help fretting sometimes that one is unable to play a more active part in the drama. To me, of course, who have for so many years past made rather a hobby of the Gulf, this has been an extraordinarily interesting cruise though it is after all merely a small side show. I forget when I last wrote to you — some time during the autumn — but whenever it was, nothing was more remote from my thoughts than that I should be so soon travelling once more over these familiar waters with another Viceroy to carry a stage further towards the appointed goal the policy to which Curzon first gave definite shape and form when I was with him here eleven years ago. But what a crowd of difficult problems must arise out of every new development. We went up in the *Lawrence* as far as Kuina and from the outposts saw the Turkish camp on the far horizon. They will doubtless soon be shifted out of that — though the floods are beginning to make operations equally difficult for both sides — but where are we ultimately to stop? It will be the problem of Persia over again, for even if we want to stop at¹⁾ what chance is there of being able to set up any permanent authority beyond our line, whatever it may be, which will be adequate to maintain any decent measure of law and order?

However it is no use looking now beyond the immediate future, and we have every reason to congratulate ourselves

¹⁾ The word omitted is difficult to decipher, perhaps Baghdad is meant.

on the good leadership and organisation — and the good luck — which have distinguished the Mesopotamian expedition so far — the exact antipodes of the E. African fiasco. Our troubles will, I fancy, begin with the climatic conditions during the hot weather and with the administrative questions which will have pretty soon to be faced, and though Mesopotamia must obviously be an Indian appendage, it would be, I think, a deplorable mistake to import hard and fast methods of Indian bureaucracy. One point by the way, which should be to your advantage. The Gulf will cease to play such a prominent part as most of the questions connected with it will have solved themselves, and it will be quite impossible to treat Southern Persia beyond the coast line as an offshoot of Mesopotamia . . .

Yours very sincerely

(sign.) Valentine Chirol.

Letter from the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in India, A. H. Grant, to the British Consul in Shiraz, Major O'Connor, 7th Dec. 1914.

Letter stamped:

Foreign and Political Department
India

Delhi, 7. 12. 14.

Private.

My dear O'Connor,

Many thanks for your letter and most kind congratulations on my acting appointment as Foreign Secretary. It has happened at a very strenuous — but intensely interesting time and candidly I shall be sorry — apart from all questions of filthy lucre — when the time comes to revert to second string.

It is a great comfort that the situation in Shiraz and Fars generally has been so comparatively peaceful of late, thanks doubtless in a great measure to your personal efforts and influence. We have all hands quite full enough as it is — and Persian complications would be a great bore at this moment

when the ill-advised entry of Turkey into the war has added so seriously to the possibilities of trouble. As regards the Shiraz appointment I quite agree with you that it should be brought under the Government of India — but I think there are objections to its complete severance from Bushire. There are overlapping interests which seem to me can only be safeguarded, if the Shiraz Consul works in direct relation with the Resident Bushire. However the question is in abeyance for the present. When it is again taken up you may be sure that your views which are on the file will be fully considered.

As regards a Vice-Consul it is difficult to see what can be done at present. But if you can make a really strong case, there is no objection to your pressing reconsideration of the matter and coming up again. But the Finance Dept. are not in a very sympathetic frame of mind at present, with such enormous expenses and such loss of railway and other revenue owing to the war. The occupation of Basra is satisfactory and should have a good effect in the Gulf generally. But the question of advancing much beyond is fraught with difficulty.

Here in India things are fairly quiet — though there is a good deal of smouldering Moslem feeling — and the Sikhs and seditionists are restless. The Frontier is fairly quiet — though there has been an ebullition in the Tochi. If the Amir can keep Afghanistan as a whole quiet all will be well. He is doing his best — but he is up against a good deal of hot-headed fanaticism and Turkish intrigue. Delhi is very pleasant at present and we get a good deal of shooting of a sort round about.

I quite agree with you that a personal interview would help to clear the air — but it is difficult to see how you could get away at present. But we may hope that in the not distant future we can arrange a meeting somehow or other.

With all good wishes

Your sincerely

A. H. Grant.

Memorandum from the British First Assistant Resident of Bushire, Captain L. Birdwood, to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, dated October 5th, 1913, with two enclosures: 1. Letter from the Resident of Bushire, Sir P. Cox, to Sir Edward Grey, 2. Memorandum from the Commercial Adviser to the Residency of Bushire, H. C. Chick.

Stamped:

British Residency

Receipt

No.

Date 30. Oct. 1913

Persian Gulf.

No. 3048, dated Bushire, the 5th (received 13th) October 1913.

From — Captain L. Birdwood, I. A., First Assistant Resident
(in the absence of the Resident),

To — The Officiating Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign Department.

With reference to this office letter No. 553, dated February 11th, 1913, I have the honour to forward for the information of the Government of India, a copy of the marginally noted despatch, which Sir Percy Cox has addressed to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, together with a Memorandum by the Commercial Adviser to this Residency on the subject of the insufficiency for the needs of British trade of transport animals on the road between Bushire and Ispahan, and the utility of more precise statistics of caravan traffic from the South to the interior, on the several main caravan routes.

Enclosure No. 1.

No. 14 — Commercial, dated Bushire, the 28th September 1913

From — Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Percy Cox, K. C. S. I., C. I. E.,
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Majesty's
Consul-General for Fars, &c.

To — The Right Honourable Sir Edward Grey, Bart, K. G.,
M. P., His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for
Foreign Affairs, Foreign Office, London.

With reference to my despatsch No. 4 — Commercial of February 12th last, reporting an agreement come to among merchants at Bushire by which they were enabled to control and reduce to a normal level rates of transport hire on goods forwarded to Shiraz, and the formation of a forwarding department under the control of the Local Government advised by His Majesty's Vice-Consul, I now have the honour to enclose a Memorandum by Mr. Chick on the subject of the insufficiency of transport animals on the road between Bushire and Ispahan.

His Majesty's Minister at Tehran recently expressed the opinion that Russia's pretensions to a larger share of the neutral zone will become the greater according as Russian influence is given time to extend southwards.

The suggestion advanced in the present Memorandum is, put shortly, that the state of the caravan route between Bushire and Ispahan has been much improved, during the Summer of 1913, and rates of hire have been reduced to more reasonable figures by concerted action; the disastrous diminution of transport animals resulting from the years of disorder is now the real factor which militates against goods from the Gulf reaching Ispahan in the quantities prevailing previous to 1908, and facilitates Russian commercial encroachment and development from the north....

The question of the provision of more reliable statistics of the traffic over all Southern roads seems also very important for Government, and merits the small outlay suggested in Mr. Chick's Memorandum which I trust His Majesty's Government will see fit to sanction.

Since this Memorandum was written I have learnt of the proposal of M. Molitor, The Persian Director-General of Posts, to establish a motor service between Tehran and Shiraz. This project lends point to the remarks made by Mr. Chick anent the desire of Persian circles here to obtain motor traction between here and Daliki, 3 stages distant on the Shiraz road; for it is obvious that facilities for motor transport from Tehran to Shiraz, without corresponding improvements between Bushire and Shiraz would but accentuate the disadvantages in transport matters of our trade vis à vis Russian trade from the north.

Memorandum.

Enclosure No. 2.

His Majesty's Minister at Tehran in a recent telegram gave prominence to the increase of Russian influence in the Isfahan province resulting from the increase of Russian trade by reason of the deplorable condition of the Southern Trade Routes, and added that in proportion as Russian influence is given time to extend southwards, so will the justifiable pretensions of Russia to a larger share of the neutral zone become greater.

Starting therefore with this axiom, we are confronted with the proposition how to prevent a further increase of Russian Trade in the Isfahan province and southwards, and how to win back, if possible, what Russian Trade has recently captured in that province.

For some months past conditions on the Bushire—Shiraz—Isfahan road have shown great improvement. The Bushire—Shiraz section has been practically free from robberies since the beginning of 1913 and illegal exactions from muleteers, "Rahdari", "Tufangchigeri", &c. have been confined to the Kumarij—Bushire section and to very reduced figures since March. As to the Shiraz—Isfahan section, we are informed that it has been quite safe since May 1913.

Caravans have circulated continuously on the Bushire—Shiraz road and between Shiraz and Isfahan since the beginning of June 1913.

On the Ahwaz—Isfahan road there have been no Kuhgilu raids during 1913, and since the Sardar-i-Jang has decided to continue in the Ilkhani-ship, the amount of traffic has been very fair, considering the insufficiency of transport animals.

In the latter half of 1912, the exorbitant rates of transport hire were killing trade from the Gulf to Central Persia as much as, and perhaps more than, insecurity and oppression on the road. Rates of hire then averaged about 450 Krans per 100 Bushire mans from Bushire to Shiraz, and 350 up to 450 Krans per 100 Shiraz mans from Shiraz to Isfahan.

The Mule Hire Agreement, to which all merchants in Bushire were got to adhere last November, and the formation of a Forwarding Department by the local Government for distributing mules and donkeys proportionately between merchants (by

which the Mule Hire Agreement could alone be maintained) put merchants in a position to get rates of mule hire reduced forthwith from 440 Krans to 300 Krans per Bushire mans and has enabled them to keep rates steady whilst lowering them slowly and perceptibly....

From the point of view of the security of the roads, and the rates of hire, conditions are thus at present — though the possibility of trouble and hostilities in the autumn must not be discounted — fairly normal and distinctly favourable to the recapture of the Isfahan market for trade via the Persian Gulf, and the check of Russian trade.

If compared with 7 years ago, imports to the Isfahan province via the Gulf are being severely restricted; and if under otherwise favourable conditions British Trade is unable to check the extension of Russian Trade southwards, it is due solely to the dearth of pack animals between Bushire and Isfahan, and Ahwaz and Isfahan....

If His Majesty's Government agree that insufficiency of transport animals from the south is largely to blame for the poor resistance that is being offered by trade from the south to the downward progress of Russian Trade, then the course outlined above might form a basis for improving conditions...

... When, as is hoped, the Muhammerah—Dizful—Khurramabad railway is, in 3 years time, well under construction, it will be desirable to expedite a decision as to next line from the sea to be built. Both Captain Wilson and the writer, in their railway reports of 1912, urged, from different points of view, that it was essential that Great Britain should regard the trade of Isfahan as an objective of capital importance. Fresh statistics since those reports make it clear that the transport hire paid of late between Bushire and Shiraz is enormous and affords substantial grounds for thinking that a railway between these two towns would pay its way before long. This attack of Russian trade on Isfahan, and pressure southwards makes it imperative that the railway from the coast to Shiraz should be taken in hand without delay....

There has recently been some discussion among Persian merchants here for reviving the project of a motor transport

company between Bushire and the foot of the kutals, and between Shiraz and Dashtarjin. This would dispense with animal transport over 3 stages of the 10 now travelled, and would materially quicken transport up-country. The suitability of the Shiras—Isfahan road to motor transport has been shown by Dr. Pugin, a German commercial agent, covering the distance between the two places in 3 days.

In this connection it will be remembered:—

1. That the German Legation in Tehran in 1906 made enquiries of His Majesty's Legation as to whether there were any British concessionary rights in the road from Isfahan to Bushire, and intended to lay the matter before his Government as a possible opening for German enterprise in Persia.
2. That a concession was granted on June 22nd, 1906, for running Renard road trains over nearly all the carriageable roads of Persia to a group of Persian notables including the present Grand Vizier His Highness Aïnu-d-Dowleh, His Highness Firma Farma, the Sipahdar, the Muin-ut-Tujjar.

The concession stipulated that the concessionaires were to work in Persia at least ten trains within two years from June 22nd, 1906; that within a year the construction of the roads must be undertaken; that after 7 years all such roads must be made carriageable or else would be excluded from the terms of the concession. On the Bushire road work was to begin in one year and had to be finished 5 years from the date of the concession.

It would presumably always be open to British capital to furnish the necessary backing, and to British subjects to co-operate in such a Persian enterprise; just as the scheme by Isfahan Notables for diverting the headwaters of the Karun may have Russian support behind it. The construction of a road for motor traffic between Bushire and Daliki would be an easy matter, but a raised and metalled road would have to be built over the great salt marsh behind Bushire—and the outlay for rolling stock, motor lorries and wagons, would be beyond the capabilities of the local Persian merchants or Tehran Notables.

It is not desired to draw any "red herrings" across the track of the scheme for railway enterprise from Bushire to the interior. I merely state the methods for improving transport from the south of the centre of Persia, in the order of their relative importance, viz:—

- (1) Railway traction between Bushire and Shiraz.
- (2) Motor traction between Bushire—Daliki; Dashtarjin—Shiraz; Shiraz—Isfahan.
- (3) Measures for providing a regular and larger supply of mules and donkeys.

(c) Import of Tea to Persia.—After Cotton-goods and Sugar, the most important article of import to Persia is Tea. The quantity of Tea imported into the north of Persia via Russia was 940 Tons.

In 1911—12 the quantity imported via
Russia was 2,286

In 1911—12 the quantity imported via
the Gulf was..... 828

It is well known that the greater part of the Tea imported via Russia, and appearing as a Russian import in the Persian Customs statistics, is now Indian (Calcutta) Tea which has come by sea via Batoum.

The "state of the southern roads" has not been the principal reason for the great increase of import of Tea via Russia, and decline in the Persian Gulf.

It would appear that, while the freight by sea from:—
Calcutta to Bushire—35 rupees per ton of 50 cubic feet;
Calcutta to Baghdad, (i. e., for Kirmanshah import)—
45 rupees per ton of 50 cubic feet;

Calcutta to Bombay per lb. 9 pies approx. —Rs. 33
per ton of 40 cubic feet;

Bombay to Bushire per chest Rs. $1\frac{1}{2}$ — 2 = Rs. $10\frac{1}{2}$ — 14
per ton of 40 cubic feet; Rs. $43\frac{1}{2}$ — 47

the freight by Austrian Lloyd steamer, transhipment at Trieste from Calcutta to Batoum—only 31 rupees per ton; and by French Messageries, transhipment at Colombo and Marseilles, from Calcutta to Batoum only 28 rupees per ton (the French

line is less patronised owing to expenses of transhipment at Colombo, in the open sea).

On the other hand, freight by P. and O. steamer and the City Line and Conference steamers from Calcutta to Batoum costs 40 rupees, as freight from Port Said to Batoum by Russian steamers (British vessels not sailing direct) is dear.

The Government of India have hardly given the import of Tea to the Persian Gulf the attention that it was hoped; it is discouraging to hear in Foreign Department letter No. 317—E. A., of February 18, that the Indian Tea trade with Persia, north and south, is insignificant from the political point of view. But if the Government of India is anxious to see checked the spread of Russian trade, and so Russian influence, to Isfahan and southwards, the reduction of the import duty on Tea into Persia, and above all, representations to the British India Steam Navigation Company and others as to the harmful effect on our political position of charging such high freights to Baghdad and Bushire, in comparison with the rates from Calcutta to Batoum will be two effective preventive methods, so far as the Tea trade is concerned.

British Commercial Position in Southern and Central Persia in General.

Perhaps more than any other remedy, an overhauling of the position of British firms in Southern and Central Persia is needed before the spread of Russian commercial influence can be really checked. It cannot be generally realised how few are the British Trading firms with European agencies in Persia, and what empty shells they are—conservative in the extreme, restricted in their operations: and in this connection the Board of Trade are already aware of several which threaten to withdraw altogether from trade with Persia. Thus:—

Messrs. Gray Paul and Company do no business with the interior of Persia, sometimes sell a little sugar; do not touch exports (except grain sometimes); confine themselves entirely to shipping business.

Messrs. Ziegler and Company sell Belgian Sugar at Bushire (but do not send it up-country); sell Manchester and Dutch piece goods at Shiraz and Isfahan; a little copper at times, candles rarely. No exports (except grain rarely).

Messrs. Dixon and Company. Piece goods only. Export grain when season favourable.

Messrs. Livingstone, Zeytoon and Company Limited import piece goods to Shiraz (small quantities); haberdashery little. Export Gum, Carpet, Opium.

Messrs. Lynch Brothers; Muhammerah, Ahwaz. Sugar.

Messrs. Strick, Scott and Company, Muhammerah. General imports, small. Export grain when season favourable.

Messrs. D. E. Somech and Company

Messrs. Holdsworth, Hougie and Company

Messrs. A. and T. J. Malcolm. Candles.

Piece goods only,
native agent.

This represents the range of activities, and the number of British firms with special representatives in Southern Persia from Bunder Abbas to Ahwaz and Isfahan.

As a consequence, it will be seen how much more important relatively are those Persian merchants, who either deal direct with British firms, or else are the legally appointed representatives of British firms in the United Kingdom, or India, to what an extent the whole fabric of our trade is in Persian hands.

This is not as it should be. Greater variety of enterprise is needed for the British firms with special representatives in Persia. At present, if Consular Officers desire to have any trade experiments made, or special wares pushed in Southern Persia, or new sorts of produce exported, they have to apply to Armenian or Persian merchants. Some of the greatest drawbacks to British firms' offices in Persia are the way in which the firms' representatives are firstly, not encouraged and obliged to learn the language, or mix with the people; secondly, are not allowed to leave their offices and travel in the immediate neighbourhood in order to find out for themselves new openings for business; thirdly, youth and inexperience of most agents sent from England.

But the greatest needs are a decision to deal more widely and extensively than at present, and greater activity by all firms in the export trade of Persia.

H. G. Chick

Commercial Adviser.

Confidential letter from the Indian Government to the Marquess of Crewe, dated January 22nd, 1914.

Confidential.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

Delhi, January 22, 1914.

My Lord Marquess,

With reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 17th November, 1913, we have the honour to submit the following remarks in regard to the prospect of Russian trade competition in Southern Persia, as adumbrated in Mr. Chick's memorandum which accompanied Sir P. Cox's despatch No. 14, Commercial, dated the 28th September, 1913, addressed to the London Foreign Office.

2. We entirely agree as to the desirability of taking all reasonable steps to facilitate and encourage trade from the south on the Bushire—Shiraz—Ispahan line, not only in the interests of Indian commerce, but on political grounds, as a safeguard against the extension of Russian trade, and thereby of Russian influence from the north. But we are confronted with the difficulty of devising practical measures, the cost of which is not prohibitive.

3. It is satisfactory to note that there has been of late a marked improvement in the general security of the route in question. This should give a stimulus to Indian trade enterprise, which is at present sadly apathetic. Another satisfactory feature is the reduction in the rates of carriage effected by the mule hire agreement. Against these, however, must be set the very serious diminution of transport animals, which cramps and cripples such enterprise as there is. To combat this Mr. Chick proposes—

- (1.) To organise transport and systematise transport conditions;
- (2.) To employ donkeys and camels on the Shiraz—Ispahan road, as accessories to mules, more extensively than at present.

These measures, he recommends, should be effected by cooperation between His Majesty's consular officers at Shiraz and Bushire and the local authorities. With this we are in full agreement. The organisation of transport service on the Nushki —

Seistan trade route has been the cause of a steady increase in trade, and we think that His Majesty's consular officers at Bushire and Shiraz should be authorised at once to approach the local authorities on the lines suggested by Mr. Chick.

4. We agree also that the provision of more reliable statistics of the traffic over the southern roads is important, and, with your Lordship's sanction, we are prepared to meet the cost, viz., £100 per annum, of the proposals to this end put forward in Mr. Chick's memorandum.

5. We have fully considered the other measures that have from time to time been suggested for the encouragement of Indian trade on the Shiraz—Ispahan route, as, for instance, the grant of State aid to traders, the possibility of inducing the British India Steam Navigation and other steamer companies to lower their freight charges on Indian tea to Persia, and the establishment of a motor service on the road. But we cannot at present advocate any of these measures.

6. As regards the proposed Persian motor service from Tehran to Shiraz, to which Sir P. Cox alludes, we trust that, if the scheme is likely to materialise, His Majesty's Government will do what may be possible to discourage it, or at any rate to press for similar action or concessions in directions in which our interest lies.

7. It is becoming increasingly evident, especially in view of the activity that Russia is now showing in regard to the construction of railway lines from the north, that the only really effective means of safeguarding and promoting British trade in Persia is the simultaneous construction of railway lines into Persia from the south coast.

It is in this direction that we consider our efforts should be directed, but in the meantime the minor measures we have now recommended may be adopted with advantage

We have, &c.

Hardinge of Penshurst
O'M Creagh
S. A. Imam
W. H. Clark
R. H. Craddock
W. S. Meyer.

Telegram from the English Consul in Shiraz to the English Minister in Teheran, February 12th, 1914.

Copy of a telegram from His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz, to His Majesty's Minister, Tehran (repeated to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf) No. 20, dated (and received) the 12th February 1914.

There has been some talk here lately among Persian merchants of starting company for constructing railway between Shiraz and Bushire. I have reason to think that the scheme was suggested by the German Consul during his stay here last summer. Idea would be that the Company should pose as Persian Company but that considerable portion of the capital should be raised in Germany. I scarcely think that the project can come to anything but it is worth watching.

Wording of the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907 relating to Persia.

Convention between the United Kingdom and Russia relating to Persia, Afghanistan and Thibet.

Signed at St. Petersburg, August 31, 1907, and ratified

September 23, 1907.

Convention.

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, animated by the sincere desire to settle by mutual agreement different questions concerning the interests of their States on the Continent of Asia have determined to conclude Agreements destined to prevent all cause of misunderstanding between Great Britain and Russia in regard to the questions referred to, and have nominated for this purpose their respective Plenipotentiaries, to wit:

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, the Right Honourable Sir Arthur Nicolson, His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias.

His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, the Master of his Court Alexander Iswolsky, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

Who, having communicated to each other their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed on the following: —

Agreement concerning Persia.

The Governments of Great Britain and Russia having mutually engaged to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, and sincerely desiring the preservation of order throughout that country and its peaceful development, as well as the permanent establishment of equal advantages for the trade and industry of all other nations;

Considering that each of them has, for geographical and economic reasons, a special interest in the maintenance of peace and order in certain provinces of Persia adjoining, or in the neighbourhood of, the Russian frontier on the one hand, and the frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the other

hand; and being desirous of avoiding all cause of conflict between their respective interests in the above-mentioned provinces of Persia;

Have agreed on the following terms: —

I. Great Britain engages not to seek for herself, and not to support in favour of British subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any Concessions of a political or commercial nature — such as Concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, &c. — beyond a line starting from Kasr-i-Shirin, passing through Isfahan, Yezd, Kakhk, and ending at a point on the Persian frontier at the intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontiers, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar Concessions in this region which are supported by the Russian Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Great Britain engages not to seek the Concessions referred to.

II. Russia, on her part engages not to seek for herself and not to support, in favour of Russian subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any Concessions of a political or commercial nature—such as Concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, &c. — beyond a line going from the Afghan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand, Kerman, and ending at Bunder Abbas, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar Concessions in this region which are supported by the British Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Russia engages not to seek the Concessions referred to.

III. Russia, on her part, engages not to oppose, without previous arrangement with Great Britain, the grant of any Concessions whatever to British subjects in the regions of Persia situated between the lines mentioned in Articles I and II.

Great Britain undertakes a similar engagement as regards the grant of Concessions to Russian subjects in the same regions of Persia.

All Concessions existing at present in the regions indicated in Articles I and II are maintained.

IV. It is understood that the revenues of all the Persian customs, with the exception of those of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, revenues guaranteeing the amortization and the interest of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement, shall be devoted to the same purpose as in the past.

It is equally understood that the revenues of the Persian customs of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, as well as those of the fisheries on the Persian shore of the Caspian Sea and those of the Posts and Telegraphs, shall be devoted, as in the past, to the service of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement.

V. In the event of irregularities occurring in the amortization or the payment of the interest of the Persian loans concluded with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" and with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement, and in the event of the necessity arising for Russia to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the first-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article II of the Present Agreement, or for Great Britain to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the second-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article I of the present Agreement, the British and Russian Governments undertake to enter beforehand into a friendly exchange of ideas with a view to determine, in agreement with each other, the measures of control in question and to avoid all interference which would not be in conformity with the principles governing the present Agreement.

*Wording of the English Note, handed to the Persian Government
September 4th, 1907 by Sir Cecil Spring Rice.*

Translation of the official communication concerning the nature and objects of the Anglo-Russian Convention, transmitted in Persian by the British Minister in Teheran to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 4th September, 1907.

Information has reached me that the report is rife in Persia that the result of the Agreement concluded between England and Russia will be the intervention of these two Powers in Persia, and the partition of Persia between them. Your Excellency is aware that the negotiations between England and Russia are of a wholly different character, since the Mushiru'l-Mulk recently visited both St. Petersburg and London, and discussed the matter with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of both Powers, who explicitly declared to him the objects aimed at by their respective Governments in Persia, which assurances he has no doubt duly reported.

Sir Edward Grey has informed me of the substance of his conversations with the Mushiru'l-Mulk, and also of the substance of M. Iswolsky's declarations, officially communicated to the British Government.

Sir Edward Grey informs me that he has explained to the Mushiru'l-Mulk that he and M. Iswolsky are completely in accord on two fundamental points.

Firstly, neither of the two Powers will interfere in the affairs of Persia unless injury is inflicted on the persons or property of their subjects.

Secondly, negotiations arising out of the Anglo-Russian Agreement must not violate the integrity and independence of Persia.

Sir Edward Grey also observes that hitherto antagonism has existed between England and Russia, each of whom has endeavoured to prevent the continuance of the other in Persia, and had this antagonism been prolonged in the present uncertain state of Persia, one or both of these two Powers might have

been tempted to interfere in the internal affairs of Persia, so as not to allow the other to profit by the existing state of things, or to profit by it to the detriment of others. The object of the present negotiations between England and Russia is to prevent such difficulties from arising between them, and these negotiations are in no wise directed against Persia, as M. Iswolsky has clearly explained to the Mushiru'l-Mulk, saying: "Neither of the two Powers seeks anything from Persia, so that Persia can concentrate all her energies on the settlement of her internal affairs." Both Ministers are entirely in accord as to the policy of non-intervention in Persia, and have left no possible ground for doubt in the matter. M. Iswolsky's words, which include the intentions of England, are as follows: "Russia's general principle will be to refrain from any kind of intervention in the internal affairs of other countries so long as nothing injurious to her interests is done; and it is quite impossible that she should deviate from this principle in this present case."

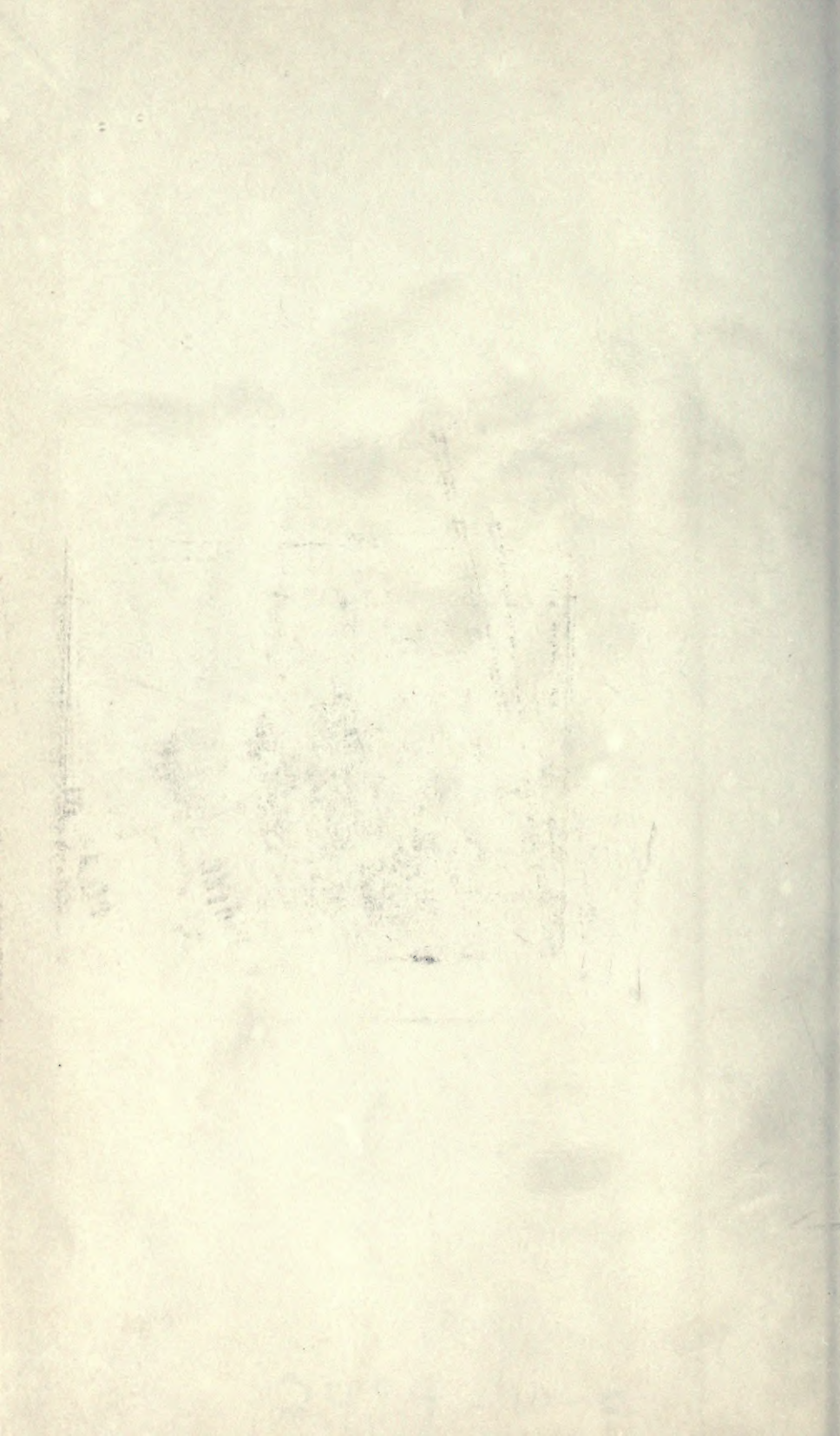
As to the reported partition of Persia between Russia and England, concerning which it is asserted that the two Powers above mentioned wish to define spheres of influence for themselves, Sir Edward Grey and M. Iswolsky have explicitly declared that these reports have no foundation. What the two Powers desire is to come to an agreement which will prevent future difficulties and disputes from arising, by guaranteeing that neither Power will aim at acquiring influence in those parts of Persia which are adjacent to the frontier of the other. This Agreement is injurious neither to the interests of Persia nor to those of any other foreign nation, since it binds only England and Russia not to embark on any course of action in Persia calculated to injure the interests of the other, and so in the future to deliver Persia from those demands which in the past have proved so injurious to the progress of her political aspirations. This is what M. Iswolsky says: —

"This Agreement between the two European Powers which have the greatest interests in Persia, based as it is on a guarantee of her independence and integrity, can only serve to further and promote Persian interests, for henceforth Persia, aided and assisted by these two powerful neighbouring States, can employ all her powers in internal reforms."

From the above statements you will see how baseless and unfounded are these rumours which have lately prevailed in Persia concerning the political ambitions of England and Russia in this country. The object of the two Powers in making this Agreement is not in any way to attack, but rather to assure for ever the independence of Persia. Not only do they not wish to have at hand any excuse for intervention, but their object in these friendly negotiations was not to allow one another to intervene on the pretext of safeguarding their interests. The two Powers hope that in the future Persia will be for ever delivered from the fear of foreign intervention, and will thus be perfectly free to manage her own affairs in her own way, whereby advantage will accrue both to herself and to the whole world.

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